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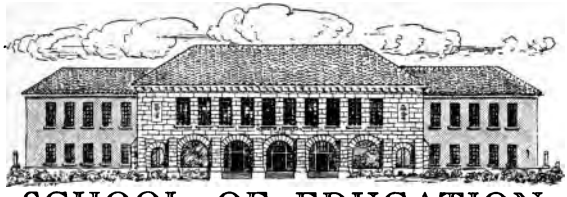
WORKING WITH THE PEOPLE

CHARLES SPRAGUE SMITH

HAND-BOOKS FOR PRACTICAL WORKERS



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Edited by

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Professor of Church History in New York University

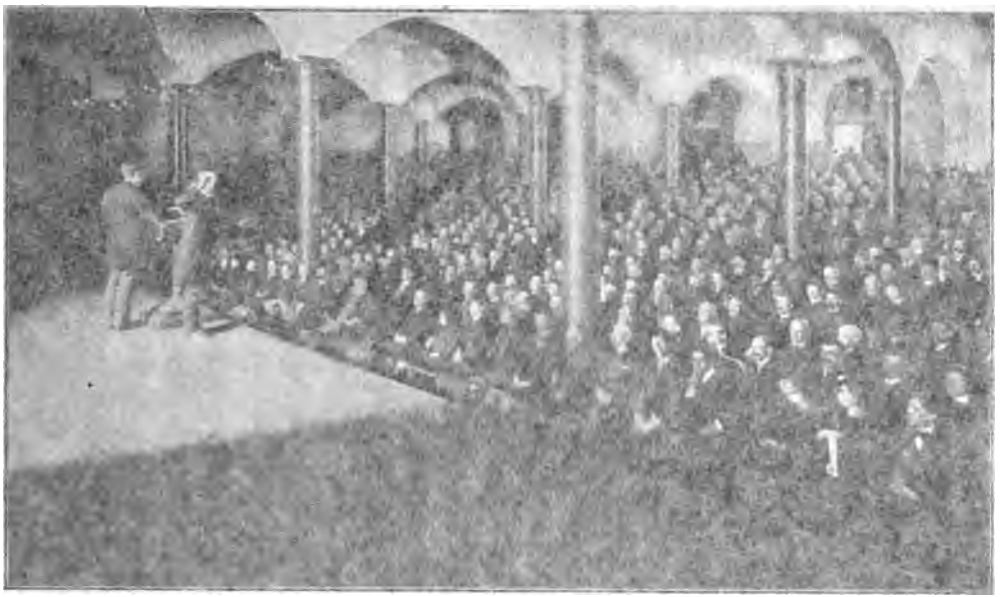
SUNDAY NIGHT AT THE PEOPLE'S INSTITUTE

[illegible]

By Charles Spague Smith

Managing Director
People's Institute, New York City

New York
A. Wessels Company
1908



WORKING WITH THE PEOPLE

By CHARLES SPRAGUE SMITH

Managing Director
People's Institute, New York City

NEW YORK
A. WESSELS COMPANY
1908

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TO
MY FELLOW-WORKERS

Working with the People

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Introduction

IN 1880 I was in Sweden, completing a sixth year of graduate study in language and literature. My student wanderings had led me in turn to many lands and thus enabled me to acquaint myself, either by residence or study, with all the languages and literatures of the Romance and Germanic families. With books laid aside and the home passage only a week distant, the mind naturally turned backward.

My immediate experience was similar to that of a traveler who, while climbing a mountain, arrives unexpectedly at the summit. Each separate landscape, already seen from lower vantage points, takes at once its ordered place, and the whole bursts upon his vision with a power far transcending the sum of all seen in the upward climb.

I too found myself looking out upon a whole, whose separate parts I had been studying in detail. I recognized forthwith that literature is a unity, not, as I had before assumed, a group of loosely correlated or wholly unrelated individuals. A plan of literary study, entirely new to me, based upon the recognition of the unity of literature, soon formed itself and became thereafter the guiding-star of all effort.*

The ten years that followed were given to an unsuccessful attempt to realize this ideal. When a conviction has become the heart of one's working life and the environment forbids its realization, a choice must ultimately be made between abandonment of the ideal, and cutting adrift.

Choosing the latter course, I began life afresh. Hitherto, as student and teacher, I had been in touch only with men of culture and social position. My life too had been a sheltered one, entirely free

*I desired to make a comparative study of the supreme monuments of related civilizations, viewed as expressions of race-experience.

from anxious forethought. And I held unconsciously the opinion that it was in accord with the eternal fitness of things that a limited number, myself included, should be safeguarded and lead the higher life, while the multitude, exposed to want, performed the menial services.

The new experiences, facing constant uncertainty and coming into contact for the first time with the many, the people, were rich in instruction. The recognition of unity extended itself gradually from literature to history and other departments of knowledge, and the soundness of the principle, in its application to the work of instruction, was tested in lectures to the people on various themes. The human chord struck aroused always interest and made each study vital.

The other truth which the new life was gradually disclosing, the brotherhood of man, I should have educed long before from the principle already accepted of the unity of human experience. But I was a dull pupil, and must needs share the lot

of the many in order that I might apprehend it not with mind alone, but with heart and soul.

As contact with life became broader and more intimate, the Social Unrest compelled attention. I found among the people distrust of all in favored position, all who had been my former comrades. The college professor was regarded as a man of one-sided knowledge, drawn almost exclusively from books prepared by others, like himself, out of touch with the people. His sincerity too was questioned, for behind the college stood the upholder and beneficiary of a social order condemned by many as unsound if not corrupt.

Similarly the clergy were regarded by many as tongue-tied, class-prejudiced, and often preaching for hire what they had ceased to believe.

The world of culture and the world of labor seemed drawing apart. It was not impossible that a forceful solution of the issues would come, with uncertain result for human progress.

As a believer in unity and fraternity, I could

have no sympathy with those who, depending upon one element alone, or by fostering class strife, sought to regenerate society, though I understood the motives guiding their thought and action. For I knew the sense of injustice, the bitterness at the heart of every workingman.

But I knew also, and from long, intimate acquaintance, the integrity as well as the limitations of college and church and of many of the condemned representatives of wealth. The coming society must look for its builders to earnest men of every calling; it will need the man of books as well as the man of brawn, honest wealth equally with honest poverty.

As I turned over these thoughts, the conception of a new educational institution gradually formed itself, one that should stand free and alone, responsible neither to college, public board of education, political, social, nor labor organization. Its governing body should be representative of all sections of society and in such form as

all approved. Its purpose should be to promote a better understanding and coöperation between men of differing occupations and social theories, and thereby assist in the peaceful reorganization of society on the basis of the recognition of solidarity. To accomplish these aims it should provide a non-partisan, non-political platform for the free discussion of all problems of the day and for ordered education, especially in Social Science.

The few to whom I submitted this project, men and women of large experience and mature judgment in social work, heartily approved it, questioning only the possibility of its realization. The way was thus prepared for an attempt to translate theory into practice.

The work thus begun, and of which this little book is the record, has broadened with the years, taking on gradually one phase of development after another. Each, however, has been but a new application of the principles of unity and fraternity accepted at the outset as fundamental

social truths. To all engaged in this Work with the People has come a larger faith in universal humanity and a firmer trust in American democracy.

Seal Harbor, Maine, Sept., 1903.

—

NOTE.

For the sake of convenience, I shall use the terms "masses" and "classes" and their synonyms in the sense in which they are commonly employed, even at the risk of being misunderstood.

That there are in actual life separations between men, created by race, birth, convictions, pursuits, wealth and other causes, no one will be foolish enough to deny, although, despite a strong recent tendency to stability, there is still in America great fluidity in social conditions in comparison with older civilizations.

But such terms as "masses" and "classes" seem to the social worker wholly misleading, implying divisions among men that are more apparent than real.

An incident will illustrate the difference in point of view between one engaged in social work and the typical benevolently disposed citizen.

I was present at a dinner not long ago where a well-known New-Yorker spoke on the Scholar's duty. He represented society as a pyramid, the rude uninstructed hand-worker at the bottom, the scholar at the apex. The top-loft dweller should, he said, not content himself selfishly with the enjoyment of the privileges of his position, but yield to those noble humanitarian impulses that command sharing with the less favored and seek to be helpful to all below him.

To the social worker that pyramid is but a house of cards. He looks upon life rather as a vast fertile plain with manifold workers therein, the labor of each being essential to the comfort of all. They are differentiated in kinds of work, grades of intelligence and skill, but such differences are insignificant in comparison with the identities that make all comrades, brothers. No matter what his earlier associations have been he will affirm that in the deepest, truest sense he is one of the people, the "masses," the term "classes" standing for a concept which has no reality behind it.

WORKING WITH THE PEOPLE

CHAPTER I

ORGANIZATION AND EXPERIMENT

In the spring of 1897, a representative body of the citizens of New York met to consider the advisability of establishing a new educational institution.

All recognized that, in a democracy, it is neither wise nor safe to neglect provision for instruction in those departments of knowledge that especially qualify the voter for the intelligent use of the ballot. Free instruction in the laws and facts of social science and a platform, non-partisan and non-political, where the questions of the day, as they arise, and social theories can be freely

discussed, were declared to be imperatively needed in order to promote good government, coöperation between all sections of our citizenship, and peaceful social evolution.

But it was plain that the primary condition for success in such a work is winning the confidence of the people. This could only be secured by an institution which clearly represented, in its organization and the spirit wherewith its work was carried on, the interests not of any section but of all the people.

It was therefore unanimously resolved to establish a new institution, upon whose board of control all sections should have representation, and whose platform, free from class or partisan influence, should become a forum for the untrammeled discussion of all subjects affecting the people's interests. The name then chosen, "The People's Institute," was intended to define the character and purpose of this new educational work.

The organization of the proposed People's Institute proceeded far more rapidly than those interested had reason to expect. On invitation of Dr. R. Heber Newton, the first formal conference was held on May 15th, in the chantry of All Souls' Episcopal Church, and the Institute was formally incorporated six weeks later, on June 28th. A group of representative men and women, selected from the ranks of capital, labor and the professions, accepted office and thereby gave to the movement at the outset a standing before the public. These results were due in a large measure to the awakened condition of the public mind on the eve of an important municipal election.

The Institute owes the largest individual debt for its initial success to Abram S. Hewitt. Immediately after the first conference, he invited the conferees to meet in his study, and all subsequent sessions were held there, the gatherings becoming notable for the breadth and eminence

of their representation. He offered also the free use of the large hall of the Cooper Union for the experimental course of lectures and discussions. President Gompers of the American Federation of Labor gave also invaluable aid, taking an active part in the organization and associating with himself a number of his lieutenants, and thus rallied to the movement from its inception the support of organized Labor.

Sections 2 and 3 of Article I of the Constitution adopted at the final conference, June 10th, define the character and purpose of the new Institute.

Sec. 2. The purposes of the Institute are: First, to furnish to the people continuous and ordered education in Social Science, History, Literature, and such other subjects as time and the demand shall determine. Second, to afford opportunities for the interchange of thought upon topics of general interest between individuals of different occupations, in order thereby to assist in the solution of present problems. . . .

Sec. 3. The Institute, as such, shall not ally itself with any political, social, or religious party, movement, or sect. It shall respect all differences of opinion, and by the cultivation of a spirit of tolerance and fraternity shall seek to unite all in a common effort for the advancement of the individual and of society.

The form of government was most carefully devised, so as to assure permanently to each section of the community represented at the conferences an equitable share of the control. But like many another wise *a priori* method, it has proved impracticable and has fallen into disuse. Nevertheless the result sought has been secured. Organized Labor, for example, has always had two representatives on the Board of Trustees, successors of the two named at the conference at which the Constitution was adopted.

The rapid development presaged by the ease wherewith organization had been effected was

not realized. The municipal campaign of 1897, from the viewpoint of a majority of those interested in civic regeneration, resulted in failure, and a period of relaxed mental tension followed during which it was found impossible to arouse interest and secure funds. Large plans of work had in consequence to be abandoned, and the Institute could offer for the first year only fourteen evenings of lecture and debate.

The theme chosen was, "The Comparative Study of Democracy," the purpose being to examine in turn the leading democracies past and present and point out the causes of their failure or success. Every third evening was set apart for the discussion of a present problem of democracy, the two others being given to the lectures on history. For each historical theme one who had made a special study of the subject was chosen. The lantern slide was used where possible, but made wholly subordinate to the address. One hour was allowed to the speaker of the eve-

ning, a second devoted to free discussion from the floor and question and answer.*

Even the most sanguine had not looked for a large continuous attendance. Average audiences of 500 would have been considered ample justification of the experiment. Cautious men had advised initiating the movement in a small lecture-room, not risking the chance of apparent failure through lack of sufficient interest to justify the use of the large hall of the Cooper Union. But the attendance rarely fell below 1,000 and, as the course proceeded, the war with Spain impending, it was considered timely to add a series of five lectures on Spanish history, and this new course drew audiences larger by several hundreds than the preceding had drawn.

Contrary to what had been prophesied, the management found no difficulty in maintaining order, though granting always the largest liberty of speech, in the belief that excesses in this direc-

* See Appendix A.

tion would be corrected gradually by the sound common sense and fairness of spirit of the audience itself. Experience has fully justified this policy.

In numbers, interest and order, the experimental course proved thus an unexpected success. But more than this, the audience was not only constantly large, but also composed almost exclusively of men identified with Labor, and all elements of the Social Unrest were represented.

It was not to be expected that ultra conservatism or ultra radicalism would be entirely satisfied with what was done and left undone on the new Institute's platform. Yet at the year's close it could fairly be affirmed that the confidence of those for whom the work was mainly undertaken had been won. Furthermore, a public demonstration had been given of the eagerness of adult wage-earners to avail themselves of opportunities of ordered instruction in history and social science, those departments of knowledge most nearly relating to government and therefore of supreme

importance in a democracy. In the world of social work throughout the country, great interest was manifested in the new movement, and proffers of support were made.

One part of the first year's experiment failed completely. The Institute planned an uptown course, parallel to that given in the Cooper Union. The theory of this latter course was that Labor, as well as the Schools, had information to give, and if men and women of the privileged classes would but listen to the experiences and opinions of representatives of Labor, the means would be provided for better mutual understanding and co-working. The programme* was prepared in consultation with Labor men and a hall engaged. But it proved very difficult to secure either of the two prime essentials, speakers or audience. Representative Labor men and women, accustomed to address East-side audiences, shrank from coming uptown, and the world of Culture

*See Appendix B.

in its turn showed lack of interest in what Labor thought. With ample funds at our disposal the work would have been continued, but the comparison of results with outlay did not justify further effort in this direction. It is gratifying to note that the League of Political Education has in a measure taken up this work, and is instructing uptown in regard to the social movements of today and the opinions of Labor, through the medium of the best informed social workers, including among these Labor's representatives.

The larger experience gained in subsequent years has added no important suggestion as to the best methods of organization and initial effort. It may not, however, be superfluous to add that whatever success came to the Institute during its first year was due primarily to the fact that the work was carried on *with* the people rather than *for* them.

CHAPTER II

GENERAL SURVEY OF WORK

It is not my intention to trace year by year the growth of the People's Institute, the purpose of this brief sketch being solely to record the results of experience, as a possible stimulus and aid to similar effort elsewhere.

The Institute is today a free evening school for adults in Social Science, providing also instruction through lectures in other departments of knowledge; a Forum for the discussion and voting upon questions of the day, with direct influence upon legislation; a People's Church; a fosterer of People's Clubs and, through alliance with another organization, a People's Hall of Music. Each one of these divisions of its work will be considered separately.

But, before entering upon these special studies, it will be well to take a broad survey of the entire

field. The first year's programme embraced nineteen lectures and discussions and drew audiences numbering perhaps as many thousands; the sixth year's courses, 1902–3,* filled 120 evenings at the Cooper Union, and the audiences aggregated between 140,000 and 150,000. A branch established in 1901 in Harlem, with two evenings of lectures and discussions weekly, drew 10,000. The club organized in 1899 carried on at the same time independently an important educational work.

The plan of work for the sixth season† at the Cooper Union was:

Sunday — Ethical Addresses. (Large Hall.)

Monday — Natural Science and Literature. (Large Hall.)

Tuesday — History and Social Science. (Large Hall.)

*See Appendix C.

†A sixth evening previously given in the lecture-room was, at the request of the Trustees of the Cooper Union and to relieve our treasury, transferred to their management.

Thursday — Social Science and Ethics. (Lecture-room.)

Friday — Problems of the Day. (Large Hall.)

It will be observed that two-thirds of the time was devoted to Social Science, including under this head history and the discussion of problems of the day. The paramount emphasis laid upon this department is not only a natural sequence of the declaration of purpose contained in the constitution "to assist in the solution of social problems," but also a witness of the Institute's desire not to do that which others can do as well — notably the Board of Education, through its free-lecture system. For similar reasons, not a single evening in the entire history of the Institute has been devoted to intellectual diversion apart from instruction. Thus no illustrated lecture on travel is admitted to the platform, unless the country described is intimately related to some question of the day (as the Philippines or the Isthmus of Panama), and studied from that standpoint alone.

And while, with the years, the work has broadened, and literature, art, ethics, philosophy, and natural science have each now their recognized places in our curriculum, nevertheless stress is laid in every instance on the sociological side. Natural Science, which would seem least to invite such treatment, is studied usually with a single course, given in the large hall, treating some broad aspect of the field, as "Evolution," "The Nebular Hypothesis," "The Geological Ages of the Earth." The special purpose of this study is, by illustrating the universal reign of law in Nature, where all changes take place gradually through evolution out of earlier conditions, to suggest analogies in social development.

A few simple rules, adopted by the management with the approval of the audience, have simplified greatly the problems naturally presented by a work that concerns itself chiefly with those questions about which men differ widely, and whose discussion is likely to arouse bitterness and

invite criticism. It has been agreed that, inasmuch as our purpose is a serious one, no speaker shall be given the platform simply because of being before the public eye or possessed of oratorical gifts.

We demand three things. 1st. Knowledge. No authority save the highest is regarded as adequate to our purpose. Though our means are limited, we never wittingly invite any speaker who is not recognized as an expert in his department. Platform ability is considered, but only in subordination to thorough information. 2d. Sincerity. Whoever comes upon our platform is expected to speak fearlessly the whole truth as he sees it, and no one suspected of insincerity is given the privilege of meeting our audience. 3d. We have no place in our plan of work for the preacher of revolution. Such a one may have knowledge and sincerity, but, from our point of view, he is intellectually unsound and, as a guide, unsafe, for we hold that, in a democracy, the people have just

the government they will; that, if fault there be, theirs is the responsibility, and that the correction can be effected by them through the ballot.

To all who can present these three credentials and whose message is deemed of value for knowledge or inspiration, our platform is open, and all social theories not inconsistent with evolutionary progress are deemed worthy of serious, sympathetic consideration. The criticism of the ultra-conservative and the ultra-radical has assailed and still assails our methods, but it is lessening with the years.

Again, we have held it to be our duty to be always absolutely frank in the exposition of our attitude in regard to Social Problems. Representatives of large financial interests have come at times to inspect our work. More than once such visits occurred at periods of great stress, with the treasury nearly empty and large obligations impending. The management has on such occasions invariably reaffirmed our faith in human

brotherhood and our resolute purpose to work for the reordering of society on that basis. If the intending giver after being fully informed could support the movement, it was well, if not, well also, for, convinced as we are of the soundness of our principles, we know we have but to wait for time to justify our faith. It is but fair to add that no proposed support has been withheld on account of this frankness.

The free discussion following each address has served many purposes. Not infrequently the new information elicited from the speaker has proved the most valuable given during the evening. On the other hand, if the speaker's position has not been well fortified, some one in the audience is sure to discover and attack its weak side; or, if there has been a wilful slurring or evasion, intended to cover over lack of knowledge or avoid expressing an opinion, the speaker may rest assured that his purpose has been perceived and will be thwarted. sometimes with scant courtesy, for

an audience accustomed to fearless utterance cannot tolerate insincerity. The opportunity is a rich one, and always recognized as such by those who have knowledge and are free to speak their thought; but at times others who have come to teach — men of honest purpose, and well but not sufficiently informed — have met pupils who knew more about the subject discussed than their would-be teachers.

The question naturally arises, How, with admission free to all and discussions involving social and political questions that are vital to the audience, are you shielded against violent outbreaks of intolerance, either on the part of individuals or groups? The audience that gathers regularly takes charge of this. In case of any undue violence of speech or any attempted disturbance — and such experiences are rare — the audience, either with or without suggestion from the chair, silences the disturber or compels his withdrawal from the hall. No less of control over the au-

dience, and no disturbance of more than the briefest and most trifling nature, such as might be made by a drunken man, have occurred in the history of the Institute. An appeal from the chair is always in order, but in practice has never been resorted to save on one or two occasions, when the chair has been unanimously sustained.

During the last winter Socialism was discussed before an audience that filled the hall, crowding aisles, entrances and all vacant spaces, even clambering upon the platform, leaving only room there for the speakers. A compact mass, composed almost wholly of workingmen, and estimated at from 3,000 to 3,500, was present in a hall seating only 1,600. Hundreds had been turned away. Both speakers were generously applauded, naturally the advocate of Socialism most, as the extra audience was almost wholly of that faith, but entire courtesy and good-fellowship ruled throughout the two and a half hours of

the debate. No policemen were present to enforce order and none were needed.

To one who has lived in intimate relations with both worlds, uptown and downtown, certain broad distinctions in knowledge, desire of knowledge and motives to public conduct are manifest. Downtown, the people have larger knowledge in regard to all questions involving the social problem and a much keener interest therein. The problem is indeed more vital to the masses than to the classes. It may safely be affirmed that no audience remotely approaching ours, either in numbers or alert interest, could be gathered continuously from the cultured classes for the consideration of social questions.

Furthermore, it has happened occasionally that a speaker from uptown has brought to us an address on a sociological theme which had been listened to with respect, probably, by the audience before which it was first presented. Our audience, on the contrary, has received it with ill-

concealed contempt, for both facts and conclusions showed a narrow range of information and life experience.

As to motives of public action, in considering questions affecting public or human interest, our audience is not confused in its judgment, to any such degree as an uptown audience would be, by considerations of expediency or individual or class advantage. Does the proposed measure accord with its conception of fundamental right and justice, with the principle of all recognizing the rights of all and each assisting the other? That is the main question. Subordinate to that consideration will come the test suggested by common sense, for in the severe school of life the man of the people has been taught to distinguish the unpractical from the practical.

But how can such an affirmation regarding motives of public conduct consist with the notorious fact of popular assent to and support of corrupt government in our municipalities? There

are many reasons wherewith to explain this apparent anomaly. First of all, sheer life-pressure. The ward boss provides work, food, protection, and the individual must have these in order to live and support his family. In the second place, lack of competent organization and leadership. The common man feels himself helpless and alone; it is useless or nearly so to struggle against the inevitable. Thirdly, reformers are usually individuals still unconverted as to class-prejudice. Their attitude smacks too often of patronage, superiority, and is abhorrent to the common man. Better far the out and out practical politician, who at least has comradeship qualities, understands the homely needs of the people, and to some extent ministers to them and does not pretend to be a superior being.

From the people's point of view, the typical reformer is afraid of real reform—all he purposes to do is to scratch the surface of things; whereas, unless the share is to cut deep, the typical man of

the people sees no advantage worth serious effort in putting a so-called reform party into power. It was not more true at the dawn of Christianity than it is of social work today that self-conversion must precede all effort to help others. When heart and intellect have accepted the doctrine of brotherhood, then and not till then effective work with the people can be done, and light will fall on every social problem.

CHAPTER III

COURSES IN SOCIAL SCIENCE

BROADLY considered, there is no greater educational need within a democracy than training for participation in public life. For, while in an autocracy the responsibilities of government are centered, in a democracy no one may delegate to another his share of authority without the community suffering to an appreciable extent. Theory and practice will never accord here, but the nearer the latter approaches the former, the fuller the participation of the entire citizenship in public life, the more perfect will be the result. The purpose of the People's Institute, in arranging courses in history and other branches of social science, was primarily to add to the practical information, which the life-struggle is already furnishing to the people, that deeper and broader knowledge of

social laws and facts which it is the privilege of the student to gather and order.

The further purpose was to promote mutual understanding and coöperation between all classes, especially between the head-worker and the hand-worker, the world of culture and the world of labor. It was believed that both would be the gainers thereby and the cause of healthful social progress be greatly promoted; the people receiving the matured results of scholarly research and therewith correcting errors of judgment and qualifying themselves to form sounder opinions upon the social questions constantly arising; the scholar gaining the people's point of view and becoming more deeply imbued with the democratic spirit.

It must not be inferred from the above statement that it was ever the intention to confine the work of instruction in social science to college professors, nor has that been the practice of the Institute. All who have information of value are welcomed to our platform, but it is self-evident

that those who are devoting their lives to research within a given field are likely, as a class, to be better qualified than others to give instruction of value, however much their knowledge may need the test of the life-experience to which such an audience as ours will put it.

The educational work in the special department of social science, which, as already observed, claims two-thirds of our time, is divided into two sections, the class work of the small lecture-room and the briefer courses or single lectures given in the large hall. The line of separation here is indicated partly by the nature of the work, partly by the platform abilities of the speaker. Subjects which cannot properly be treated in a single lecture or in a course of two or three lectures, or are in their character adapted only to a small audience, are assigned to the class-room, save in those rare cases where the scholar is able to make even an abstruse theme so attractive as to draw a large popular audience. Similarly

scholars whose work is of great value to us, but whose platform ability is inferior to their knowledge, give their courses in the lecture-room.

Our experience demonstrates that there is larger educational opportunity here than we are at present able to utilize. There should be at least three divisions of such work. 1st. That done in a large hall for a general audience of 1,000 and above on questions of the day and broad presentations of history or social problems. 2d. Courses in a lecture-room seating some 500 and corresponding to our present class courses. These might be made very severe, but no preliminary reading and no recitation should be required. We can require none of our class-audiences. Both of these methods of instruction would meet the needs of adults who are too much exhausted by their day's toil, or too ill-fitted by earlier training, to make researches outside, yet are eager for knowledge in this field. 3d. True class courses for a younger group and a few adults, with as-

signed reading and some method of testing acquisition. For these last courses, especially, regular instructors should be employed.* The experience of the People's Institute, with its well filled large hall and overcrowded lecture-room, furnishes the guarantee that such work will meet a large popular need.

It would be of doubtful value to enumerate themes or speakers. It will suffice to say that, in the field of history, our own country has properly received chief attention, thereafter modern history and government and the history and government of New York City. In the general department of social problems, the special needs of time and place have furnished the criterion.

Thus, when the United States was entering upon her new colonial experience, the Institute

*Younger college instructors would be qualified for this class-work. But for the platform work, both in the large and small halls, only the ripest scholars suffice. The test of accuracy, brought in the questions, demands the fullest knowledge on the part of the instructor.

arranged not only for courses descriptive of the character of the lands and peoples whose government had passed under American control, but also for careful comparative studies of the experiences of the leading colonizing nations of the world, Spain, Holland, and England. The clear lesson of the course was that the policy of exploitation of a colony is always in the end suicidal, and that only a policy that postpones the apparent interest of the dominant land to the real interests of the subject land and encourages self-rule works for the prosperity of both and mutual good feeling. Similarly in regard to the mooted questions of public control and ownership, we are ever on the alert to secure reports of experiment throughout the world, where possible directly from the field.

Thus we are today watching closely the social-political movement in New Zealand and Australia and the coöperative and municipal experiments in England and on the continent of Europe. Occur-

rences like the late coal-strike or the Ramapo water question of earlier date bring to our platform speakers intimately identified therewith — the late Henry D. Lloyd, among others, in the first instance, and the Hon. Bird S. Coler in the second. Our close relations with Labor on the one side and the world of scholarship and public life on the other make it possible for us to secure first-hand information from all sides.

Beside these courses, dealing with issues of the day and thus of immediate value in application, the different social theories, *e.g.* Socialism and the Single Tax, also the laws of Social Science and such themes as "Industrial History," "The Distribution of Wealth," "The Liquor Traffic and its Regulation," are studied. Where possible all sides of every problem investigated are presented, the method of public debate between exponents of leading theories being often employed.

Broadly speaking, none of our courses, with the exception of the Sunday evening series, are

THE CLASS-ROOM

more popular than those in Social Science, and not only is this true of those given in the large hall, but also of the closer studies of the lecture-room. It is a common experience, when a course of six lectures on an abstruse social theme is given, to have every seat of the 260 in the lecture-room occupied and from 50 to 150 standing at every lecture. This attendance would be even larger, but both acoustics and ventilation leave much to be desired; furthermore, the class-lecture upstairs has often been forced to compete with a popular gathering, political or otherwise, downstairs in the large hall of the Cooper Union.

The general outcome of the work in Social Science, so far as our audience is concerned, has been a clearer common perception of the objects to be striven for by a democracy, notably the nearer aims, a fuller recognition that all social advance is gradual and demands a preparedness on the part of society under penalty of retrogradation, a greater tolerance between men of differing

social theories, and a consciousness of the imperative need of constant alertness in defense of democratic rights and liberties. All history affords us illustrations of the causal relation between national sins of omission and commission and penalties paid, and teaches that vigilance, preëminently in a democracy, is the price of safety.

And not only has our audience gained but also the economists, historians and men in public life, who have come upon our platform, have had their own field of vision enlarged by being brought into close relation with the people's ideas. The ever strengthening bond of mutual understanding and coöperation between the representatives of college and active life who come frequently to our platform — men of national repute in their special fields — and the great body of the people is one of the chief sources of satisfaction to all who have been engaged in this work.

A sane public opinion, informed as to the outcome of past and present social experiment, freed

from class prejudice and, especially in this country, inspired with profound faith in democracy, is everywhere needed to promote healthful social progress. And this result cannot be achieved nor society progress, through peaceful stages of evolution to a higher phase, if scholar and toiler remain apart. To both, material gain has ceased, in the large sense, to be the supreme or even a main object of life-endeavor; to the first, because he has found the pursuit of knowledge more satisfying; to the second, because, from the point of view of his class, he recognizes increasingly the pursuit of wealth as beyond his powers. Indeed, with the rapidly developing social consciousness in the labor world, the desire for wealth in the individual sense is passing from the hand-toiler, as for other reasons it has passed from the brain-toiler. Hence they should be and I trust are to be allies, comrades in a near future.

Our experience indicates that places of meeting should be provided meanwhile where class-

suspicion ceases and entire freedom of thought and utterance rules. Such common meeting places can, in my judgment, be provided only by an organization like the People's Institute that works with the People, entirely free from all outside control.

As the writer and his fellow trustee George Tombleson were leaving the home of Mr. Hewitt at the close of the final conference on organization, our host, accompanying us to the door, while reaffirming his deep interest in all that had taken place, added: "But I have seen this thing tried many times before. It has always failed and you will fail also." If, to Mr. Hewitt's great satisfaction and in part because of his steadfast support, that prophecy has proved untrue, it would seem that not merely has a long recognized educational need been satisfied, but also that the means employed for this purpose—a People's platform—is peculiarly adapted to the end in view.

CHAPTER IV

OTHER DEPARTMENTS — ETHICS, LITERATURE, ART, NATURAL SCIENCE, MUSIC, THE DRAMA — EXCURSIONS — BRANCHES

WHILE all work outside the field of Social Science has been treated as subsidiary, the Institute has recognized the value, even for its special purposes, of both the information and stimulus that can be drawn from other departments of knowledge, and has assigned to each subject in turn such place as its importance, relatively to the whole, appeared to demand.

The study of ethics as furnishing the basis for moral judgment has thus been given, chiefly in the lecture-room, a prominent place.

Literature has been studied mainly for its ethical and social stimulus, and experience is leading us to confine our courses here to the supreme works and the greatest writers.

Art has been limited usually to a single course intended to give a clear knowledge of some section of the field. Here, however, as in the case of certain other lines of study, we have introduced with success a method of instruction by excursion.

The special purpose of our courses in Natural Science, as has been already stated, is to illustrate the reign of law and to place the universal as background to all our studies of social evolution.

A very important extension of our work was made in the summer of 1900–01. Mr. Franz X. Arens proposed to the management that the Institute should give to him the use of its platform for the experiment of providing, at nominal price, symphony concerts of a high order and of an educational character. The proposal was heartily accepted, and the price of single admissions to a large part of the hall was fixed at ten cents; for the course of five concerts, at twenty-five cents.

The result in the third year was that the entire seating capacity of the hall was disposed of

weeks before each concert, and all standing-room allowed by police regulations was occupied at every performance.* The money from the sale of tickets meets from one-fourth to one-fifth of the expense; the remainder is furnished by voluntary contributions.

These concerts have improved steadily from year to year in musical quality as well as in popularity. The educational purpose is always held prominently in view in determining the selections, and every number is preceded by a brief exposition from the platform of the important facts concerning the composer himself and the theme and character of the composition. The direction of this allied and independent work is in the hands of the People's Symphony Concert Association.

For the last two seasons, the management has been experimenting with recitals of the dramas of Shakespeare, in order to test the demand for a

* In the fourth year, 1903-4, the house was sold out for the entire season before the first concert was given.

worthy People's Theater. The course, given at first in the lecture-room, was in the second year transferred on account of overcrowding to the large hall, and has drawn on every occasion an audience of 2,000 or above.* This clearly indicates that a People's Theater, where standard plays should be presented, at pri es similar to those of our Symphony Concerts, would meet a distinct and large need. What a lever for civic education and inspiration might not such a People's Theater become! One has but to walk up Broadway at night, at the hour of closing the theaters, and meet the issuing throngs to recognize the vast latent potentialities for good influence upon civic life held by the stage of today.

As the last season was drawing to a close, Ben Greet, director of the Old English Company giving the mystery play and Shakespearean dramas, offered to stage "Everyman" upon the

* Since writing the above, the third year's course has begun. The audience is thronging the house, and hundreds are being turned away, unable to find even standing-room.

A SHAKESPEAREAN RECITAL

Cooper Union platform, and made a more than fair financial proposal, his desire and that of his American management being to bring the best to the people. The fee, $500, required by city ordinance for a theatrical license prevented the experiment. But the stage of our present hall at Cooper Union is wholly inadequate in size and appointments either for musical or dramatic entertainment.

Reference has already been made to excursions in connection with some of our courses. The experiment was suggested by what was being done in this field by the City History Club. Its chief instructor, Dr. Kelley, gave in successive years class lectures to our audiences on City history and illustrated them, as he had done for the History Club, with excursions to those points of historical interest, in or near New York, to which reference had been made in the lectures. This series of excursions proving always a success, the method was applied also to the department of art. After courses of lectures, evening visits under competent

guidance were arranged to the Metropolitan Art Museum. These proved equally popular, and it was proposed to extend the method to Natural Science, but our funds forbade.

I am convinced that there is a broad field of possibilities here for both museum and open-air work following upon lectures or other class-room instruction. Our art and scientific collections would have a very different educational value for the people if illuminated by preparatory courses of lectures, followed by visits under expert guidance; while field studies, especially in the various departments of natural science, would not only afford pleasure and profit, but might lead to very important results in discovering talent and determining vocation.

Thus far we have enumerated only the courses offered at the Cooper Union. But the educational work of the Institute has not been confined to that locality, though its most important influence has been exerted therefrom.

For a brief time, a branch with one lecture a week held its sessions in the large hall of the Educational Alliance on East Broadway. Though the work there was discontinued after a few months, owing to the imperative need of using our funds for other purposes, an important permanent result was accomplished. Mr. Thomas Davidson opened that course with a series of addresses entitled, "Problems which the Nineteenth Century presents to the Twentieth." The interest, especially of the young men from 18 to 25, became so keen that a class was proposed for further study.

This work, carried on at first in a class-room of the Alliance, has developed into an important East-side educational movement. Even the untimely death of its devoted leader, a scholar of phenomenal attainments and the most resolute independence, has not checked its growth, but, as "the Davidson class," "the Breadwinners' College," or "Branch B of the Educational Alli-

ance," it has continued to do a broad and inspiring work for both sexes.

In 1901, the Institute established the Harlem People's Institute in Marion Hall, at 125th Street and Lexington Avenue, offering two weekly courses, ethical addresses on Sunday evenings and problems of the day on Thursdays. Mr. John Martin, a former member of the London County Council and an earnest student of Social Problems, has had charge. The audiences, at first insignificant, attained after a time goodly proportions, averaging some 350 on Sundays and 150 on Thursdays, a result deemed excellent for that locality; but financial conditions have made it impracticable to maintain there the experiment in the fulness of the original plan.*

Independently, but in friendly alliance with the Institute and as a declared outgrowth of its work, a People's Forum has been organized at New

*The work is now carried on in the hall of the Union Settlement at 237 East 104th Street, and is limited to one evening a week, Sunday. See Appendix E.

Rochelle. At every session* the rooms are crowded beyond their seating capacity by an audience composed almost exclusively of workingmen, who listen to an address or discussion upon a problem of the day. Similar local People's Institutes are planned in other localities, near and remote, their organizers being men who have come into close touch with the work carried on at the Cooper Union.

In estimating results, it must be borne in mind that our funds, derived wholly from annual voluntary contributions, have not risen above $11,000

*The sessions are held on alternate Sunday afternoons. Since writing the above, the work has been transferred to the hall of the Public Library. The writer presided at the opening meeting of the second year, and found an audience present not only filling the seats (300 to 400) but crowding all the standing-room. It was composed not of workingmen only, but also of a goodly number of representatives of the other sections of society, an audience of the people in the truest sense of the word. The possibilities for this Forum to aid in the reordering of the life of New Rochelle, on a basis of better understanding and coöperation between different classes, are at present most promising. See Appendix D for programme of the New Rochelle Forum.

a year, and the policy, adopted at the outset, never to plan for extension unless we had well-founded reason to expect a corresponding increase in receipts, has held our growth within strict bounds.

The result has been always a clear balance sheet and a healthful forward movement, each step in advance being well assured before the next was attempted. On the other hand, many departments might have accomplished much more had we been able to provide adequately for them. Furthermore we might have realized long ere this at least one of our plans of extension, namely that of establishing a Brooklyn People's Institute.

In short, while the Institute, on its educational side, remains chiefly a school of Social Science, it has also become a school of Ethics, Art, Literature and Natural Science, in coöperation with an allied society, a People's Hall of Music and further a center for historical and other excursions. The first step also has been taken toward developing

a People's Theater.* Branches have been established and its example is stimulating similar organization elsewhere.

*Since writing the above, the difficulties in the way of completing the experiment of a People's Theatre have been overcome and the Ben Greet Company has given three Shakespearean representations. These included a matinee, the "Merchant of Venice," intended especially for the teachers and older children of the public schools. The prices of admission ranged from fifteen to fifty cents.

The success has been complete, of the matinee especially, the hall being sold out and hundreds turned away. Cooper Union has never offered a more beautiful sight than it did on Saturday afternoon, May 14, 1904, when some 1600 happy school girls, from fourteen to eighteen years old, saw — many for the first time — a Shakespearean play. A large number had copies of the play in their hands.

An entirely new field of work is thus opened to the Institute. Through dramatic and musical matinees and through lectures it can supplement inspiringly the work of the public schools. The writer hopes not only to stage the Shakespearean drama, but also, in English translation, that of other nations, notably the Greek.

CHAPTER V

A PEOPLE'S FORUM

RECENT municipal history in the United States furnishes sufficient argument of the need of constant watchfulness, if the rights and properties of the public are to be safeguarded. Our cities are not indeed composed of a larger percentage of freebooters relatively to the entire population than the cities of the old world, but, in the eagerness to become rich, or at least to care for individual interest, it had become our municipal habit to allow public affairs to be managed by those who would. It was the easier way. It might involve the payment of blackmail, even compel winking at doubtful practices on the part of one's political associates or party leaders, yet so long as the municipal life was, in the main, well ordered, the economy of personal energy was worth the price paid. Be-

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.

sides, a habit once acquired becomes second nature and is almost as incapable of change as that received at birth.

So it came about that the phrase by which Philadelphia has been recently designated "corrupt and content" might have been applied with a certain measure of justice to a majority of our larger cities. To be sure there were sporadic outbreaks, when the combination of corrupt politics and get-rich-quick freebooters had played their game too openly. But it was only a Rip Van Winkle disturbed in his sleep, and the old somnolence soon returned.

Today the observer who should pass such criticism on New York City, at least, would prove his incompetence. It is not that the cupidity of our local freebooters has diminished, or that our boodler politicians are any less ready to demand or willing to accept "graft," but that the citizens are awakening and here and there watch-towers have been set up. At the first sign of danger the

watchers signal to each other, and more than once there has been a marshaling of the civic hosts and an utter rout of the common enemy. It would furnish food for reflection to compare the franchise legislation of a few years ago, openly introduced in our state legislature and passed without a murmur of disapproval from the public, and the fate of the so-called "grab-bills," stealthily introduced and vigorously and insidiously pushed at the last session of the legislature, only to meet with utter defeat, solely because our citizenship is today alert.

One of the instruments that has proved efficacious in defeating schemes opposed to the people's interests has been the mass-meeting. The theory of the mass-meeting is that, through a gathering assembled in response to a universal call, the voice of all the people, as distinguished from the voice of any class or interest, may find utterance. In theory it is thus a fitting medium of expression of the will of a democracy, and recalls the old New

England town-meetings, certain Swiss cantonal gatherings, and more ancient democratic assemblies. But every New Englander knows that the typical town-hall was usually large enough to contain at least a majority of the registered voters. What hall could contain a similar proportion of the voters of New York City?

The incongruity of relation between mass-meeting and voting population in a city like New York would suggest apparently that any gathering of the people in any available hall was, for the practical politician, a negligible factor. But, in practice, such is not the case. A well attended mass-meeting in any of our larger cities, with the press to give broadcast report of the proceedings, strikes a note which is heard and in a measure heeded by all men in public office.

There is a hall in New York consecrated as scarce any other in America* by the memories of

* Faneuil Hall, Boston, is a possible exception, but that is a very small audience-room and wholly unadapted today to popular gatherings.

great tribunes of the people. The Cooper Union where Abraham Lincoln delivered one of his historical addresses, where in more recent time two men loved by the people, Henry George and Father McGlynn, did their chief platform work, is the place above all others of popular assemblage. The audience that gathers there, while rarely numbering 2,000 at a mass-meeting,* is commonly recognized as representing the people of New York, Abraham Lincoln's "common people." In this hall the People's Institute has carried its work in Social Science to a culmination by establishing a People's Forum — in other words, a place where the people, without distinction of party, may register by public vote its wish in favor of or in opposition to all important pending measures and may also call its elected officials to a public accounting. This branch of the Institute's work has been sometimes styled "a perpetual mass-meeting." It was not part of the original

* The hall seats only 1,600.

plan, not at least in its present extension. It is an outgrowth suggested by experience.

All our educational work in Social Science, described in the earlier chapters, is in a sense purely a furbishing of weapons and a drilling of recruits for future service in the campaigns of democracy. On the one side it is theory or general instruction, on the other a testing of living social and economic questions, such as compulsory arbitration and the excise problem, by the standards of general knowledge and the fundamental principles previously ascertained. But questions arise constantly that invite more than a dispassionate academic interest. Measures are brought every year before our state or local legislatures that vitally concern the common interest — those rights which the people regard as inviolable. What should be the attitude of the People's Institute in this regard? It is primarily an educational institution, and its constitution wisely forbids alliance with any political, social or religious party or movement. But

there are interests that in their scope include all these divisions, represent the indivisible people. It has been judged both fitting and necessary, in order to complete our work in Social Science and to justify our name — the People's Institute — that in broad questions of this nature, affecting the entire people, the Institute should take a stand, and through it, as one agency, the people's voice should be enabled to find utterance. Such considerations have led to the establishment of the People's Forum.

Friday evening is especially reserved to this department, though, where the occasion demands, we do not hesitate to use other evenings or parts thereof for this purpose. A portion of the work which we class today under the Forum was embraced in the original plan, to wit, the discussion of questions of the day, and this has been already broadly studied in an earlier chapter. The most important single contribution to civic instruction made by the Institute in this field was the Trust

Conference held for five evenings, February 18, 19, 20, 22 and 23, 1900. The discussion was notable for the broad field of interests, the eminence of those who took part, and the diversity of points of view, as well as for the large constant attendance, aggregating about 7,000. The addresses should have become a permanent record, but the resources of the Institute did not permit the necessary outlay.

The second division of this department embraces the examination of and voting upon questions pending before state or civic bodies, sometimes those before the national legislature, and hearing reports from public officials upon the conduct of their offices. The theory of democratic government is that those holding public office were placed there not for personal pleasure or profit, nor for party advantage, nor to work their own unguided will, but as agents of the whole body of the people to do its will. If, therefore, that which they propose to do or have done is clearly con-

trary thereto, we as representatives of the people should not keep silent; if it is a flagrant infringement of rights the people consider inalienable, we should not only protest ourselves, but also use our influence to arouse all our fellow-citizens to a similar protest. Not that the People's Institute claims to be the sole or chief medium through which the people's voice and wish can make themselves heard, but that it does represent a large body of earnest men of all political and social faiths, vowed to the conservation and extension of the democratic idea. Such is the theory, and examples will illustrate the practice.

In March, 1899, a proposal was made by the Metropolitan R. R. Company to the Rapid Transit Commission to take over in perpetuity the subway franchise. The Commission was favorably inclined to the proposal, and a bill was introduced in Albany, at its motion, to permit such transfer, amending in this point the Rapid Transit Act, which requires city ownership. If there is one

thing upon which the people are united today it is that the public-service franchises of a municipality are the property of its citizens and should never be permanently alienated. The People's Institute management knew this. From sources in which it had reason to place confidence it learned that the state legislature was favorably disposed to the plan of the Commission. The press meanwhile was silent or nearly so. On March 31st the first public protest against the proposed cession and a demand for civic ownership were made from the Institute's platform, and the audience unanimously approved the suggestion of holding a mass-meeting and uniting with itself all citizens of similar views.

That meeting was held on April 11th, organized Labor and a large representation of the most eminent citizens coöperating. Other civic organizations had by that time taken similar action, and the press in the main had given its hearty support. In face of the public clamor, the Met-

ropolitan R. R. Company withdrew its proposal, and at Governor Roosevelt's demand the Senate and Assembly almost with unanimity amended the bill, substituting, in place of the grant in perpetuity, a 35-year cession, with privileges of renewal. The amended bill was vetoed by Mayor Van Wyck, and the Commission thereupon determined to make a new attempt to carry out the provisions of the Rapid Transit Act. This attempt was successful, and the subway is thus today the property of the city. It would be idle as well as impossible to attempt to define the share of the People's Institute in achieving this result, that commends itself to all citizens alike.

No similar occasion has arisen since, and it is clear that the Institute should only use as a last resort this method of organizing a protest of the entire citizenship. The opinions of our audience are, however, ascertained regularly on all important pending measures, and the result of the votes taken are communicated to the proper au-

thorities. During the year just ended, the audience supported with a unanimous vote, estimated at 1,400, the legislation proposed by the Child Labor Committee, and with a vote of 1,700 to 1 the Commissioner, Mr. Robert W. DeForest, in his campaign in defense of the existing Tenement House laws. In the latter instance, the Commissioner's position was violently attacked from the floor by one reported to be interested in East-side real estate. The audience, largely dwellers in tenement houses, pledged its support, not only as a body but as individuals, and promised the Commissioner's representative to arouse, if necessary, the entire East side for the defeat of the attempt to weaken the safeguards placed by existing law about tenement life. In both cases the legislature's final action was in accord with the vote taken.

A suggestive vote upon a national question was taken at the close of an address upon the Philippines by President J. G. Schurman of Cornell

University. The subject had been discussed on many occasions before, and by men representing different policies, so that the vote taken is to be considered not as the outcome of the impressions of that evening alone, but rather as the deliberate judgment of the audience. After apparently the entire audience, some 1,700, had expressed by a rising vote their approval of President Schurman's position, that ultimately the Filipinos should choose for themselves as to independence or the contrary, the chairman said: "It has been stated in high quarters that our flag, having once been raised in the Philippine Islands, should never be hauled down. Those who approve this proposition are requested to rise." Only 4 rose. An equally significant vote — 1,300 to 10 — was that of the winter 1901–2 on the excise question, that the city itself, not the state legislature, should have the decision in this matter. This popular verdict for local option accords with the consensus of opinion of the best students, and in the former

instance, also, the judgment of the audience is in accord with the teachings of political ethics and history.

During the last weeks of the recent session the heads of eight municipal departments accepted our invitation to report on the conduct of their offices. We hope in time to persuade our leading civic and state dignitaries that it is to their advantage as well as to ours, and to the fostering of right relations between public officials and the people, that they also should report to the people through the Institute at least once during their terms of service.

The influence upon current public action of the Institute is not limited to the work done through its Forum, for, as representative of the audience, the director is constantly invited to unite with others in work believed to be for the advancement of the people's interests.

The Forum side of the Institute work is a part of that municipal awakening which has come

recently to New York in common with other American municipalities, and is the earnest of permanence in good government. But it is capable of being made far more representative of our citizenship and efficient in behalf of all the people's rights than it now is. Such complete development, however, depends today not upon the desire and intelligence of the Institute, but rather upon the willing coöperation of all earnest citizens. It has been founded upon the confidence of the people, non-partisanship, freedom from class control, and faith in democracy. On broader foundations it could not well rest.

But conceive of a council of our most representative citizens, one that commanded the respect and support of all sections of the community, standing in living constant relation to it, watching on the one side the conduct of public officials, as for instance the Chicago Municipal League watches, and, on the other, counseling and assisting whenever occasion demanded united civic

action. What a means such a People's Forum might become for promoting fellow-feeling and comradeship in the effort to achieve the full and permanent regeneration of our city and state and, in so far as the influence of our imperial state reaches, the justification in the world's eyes of democracy as a national experiment!

Open or unconfessed disbelievers in democracy will look askance upon this provision of a mouthpiece for the unorganized multitude, "the motley," as it has been called, but the believer in popular government holds that for America there is safety only in ever more and more democracy, provided only sound education and character building accompany every forward step.

CHAPTER VI

A PEOPLE'S CHURCH

At the opening of the second year we were asked by one of the leading supporters of the Institute whether we would be willing to undertake the experiment of arranging for Sunday evening addresses of a religious nature. The answer was in the affirmative, with the premise that the plan should be broad enough to admit all religious teachers, from the Roman Catholic priest to the representative of an ethical society. This was agreed to, and the proposal was then communicated to the audience. After the subject had been fully discussed and objections brought and answered, it was voted with practical unanimity to add a Sunday evening series of ethical addresses to our other courses.

We then proceeded to draw up a platform and rules for our guidance. The director suggested

as platform or creed the two affirmations which seemed to him to express that which was common to the entire audience, Jew, Christian and Non-believer.

1st. The Brotherhood of man.

2d. Loyal service to "the Power not ourselves that makes for righteousness."

It was added that we did not pretend to define the nature of that Power, leaving such definition to each individual.

This platform having been accepted, two rules were proposed and passed.

1st. There shall be no attempt at proselyting.

2d. There shall be no attack of creed upon creed.

The course opened on February 5, 1899, and we have just closed the fifth year. The programme for each evening is:

1. Music, Vocal or Instrumental.
2. Address.
3. Music.
4. Discussion.

The whole occupies 2 to 2¼ hours, from 8 to 10 or 10-15. I doubt whether during the entire five years the audience has ever fallen so low as 1,200. The hall, seating 1,600, is usually filled, or nearly so; not infrequently from 50 to 150 are standing; the audience has reached on many occasions 2,000. It is composed, as all our audiences are, — save those attracted by the Symphony concerts or Shakespearean recitals, — almost exclusively of men and chiefly from the ranks of Labor. Our average Sunday evening audience of 1,500 will not contain 100 women, 50 to 75 being the usual number. Not only in numbers but also in alert interest it is our best regular audience. Workingmen, too exhausted to come to our hall at any other time, are present on that evening, expecting to receive a stimulus for the week. The speakers represent the highest ability in the metropolitan pulpit; eminent laymen and speakers from a distance also take part.

Rev. Thomas R. Slicer, one of those who have

contributed most in personal service to the helpfulness of our Sunday evening work, said of it in an address in 1901 before a national religious conference in Saratoga: "No more valuable or significant work among the masses of unchurched people in a great city has been done than that which has been carried on at Cooper Union. The audiences demand that the man who is to speak to them shall address himself to the live topics and real needs of the people in their everyday life."

The general title for the Sunday course given on our programme is "Ethical Addresses and Discussions," and the subjects usually selected by speakers are such as do not involve controverted religious questions. But this is by no means the invariable rule. Some of our most valued addresses have treated the fundamental questions of religious faith, *e.g.* a series by Dr. Lyman Abbott on "Christ's Laws of Life,"* an-

*Published in the *Outlook*, in the issues of January and February, 1900.

other by Rev. Thomas R. Slicer on "The Skeptic, the Agnostic and the Believer," and a single address by Rev. Minot J. Savage on "Religion, its Changing Forms and its Eternal Essence." No one of these addresses offended against our rules, the speaker in each instance seeking to bring into prominence only that which was fundamental to righteous living.

Difficulties have arisen, — almost wholly from the platform side, — but with the years and experience they have been gradually overcome and today their occurrence would occasion surprise. Such difficulties have been occasioned by the inability of some speakers to conform themselves to the conditions of our work. They have not recognized sufficiently that our composite audience, with its diversities of inheritance and training, could not accept any sectarian message; that at any rate the Institute had not gathered it for such a purpose and with such understanding. Seeking unconsciously even, as it were despite

themselves, to impress upon their auditors that which they held to be most vital in religion, they have failed utterly to reach them. Such failures relatively to the whole work have been rare and, as in the case with the college professor, so with the preacher, the New York pulpit has gained, is gaining constantly, I believe, through being brought into connection with our work.

The preacher faces an audience that desires and expects facts presented in a direct, clear fashion, — a religion, stripped of all sectarianism, that can be refound in all ethical faith and affords place for all "honest doubt." In the discussion that follows the positions taken are brought to the test of actual life. It may well be that some of our metropolitan clergy do better work from their own pulpits because of their experience in our hall. Who has not felt in listening at times to a pulpit address how much both preacher and people would gain were "answering back" allowed. *Ex-cathedra* authority, assumed with the

priestly vestments, would venture less often to offer crude thought and inexact statement.

Some clergymen have hesitated to accept our invitation because of the limitations imposed. Yet those who have made the deepest impressions upon our audience are men — Jew, orthodox and unorthodox Christian alike — who, while giving a religious message not antagonistic to any creed, have frankly affirmed their own religious faith without, however, urging upon the audience its acceptance. Not infrequently the question is asked after such an address: "Where is the speaker's church?"

What have been the results of the five years' work of the People's Church? In part they are recorded already in the suggested gain to the metropolitan clergy from facing at intervals an audience that challenges statements and presents differing points of view. But this is the least part of the whole. To the clergy the opportunity is afforded of meeting the people in their own hall

and being put in touch with the democratic spirit. The audience is just the one the earnest ethical leader of today is in search of. For whatever be the criticism brought by the unintelligent against the pulpit, charging it with neglecting religion to concern itself with non-churchly matters, the true priest today recognizes that religion is more than dogma, more than a round of prayer and praise; that unless business and politics are based thereon neither they nor it are what they should be. Privileged by his calling to be a teacher of ethics, such a priest observes the movement of the world, notes wherein conduct and ambition accord and disaccord with ethical law, and seeks, so far as in him lies, to establish harmony of relations.

Printed books on Social Science are of value, but the book that opens where the people gather affords a kind of knowledge not to be gleaned from the printed page, for man is ever more than any record of his acts. So that when an intimacy

of relation has been established between a preacher and our audience, as is the case with many of our pulpit leaders, that book of life is at his hand wherein to read what the people are thinking and desiring.

The audience has gained. I have observed during the years a gradual passing away of that bitterness and suspicion cherished by many of the people toward the church, manifested at first in a measure even in our hall and more outspoken outside. What should come is coming, has come. While sincere men stand apart, they may suspect each other's motives. But bring them together, let them compare views, and then, if they cannot agree, they will at least learn to respect each other, and are more than likely to become comrades, friends. Such a relation between pulpit and people we are fostering, to the advantage of both.

It may be, as the radical affirms, that the world will outgrow the church. It has not done so yet,

and I am disposed to think rather that the world has a present duty to fulfil toward the church, one which it neglects too much, in leading it back from man-made dogma to the simple religious teachings of the church-founders. Those teachings, interpreted in terms of the social thought of today, would often show a wondrous vision penetrating through and beyond, and a voice speaking far more in accord with today's needs and knowledge than for the age contemporary with its first utterance. In limiting, as our conditions counsel and compel, the religious teachings of our platform to those ethical principles that are fundamental and universal, we are in our narrow sphere doing this for the church, and thus realizing in part that church of the future, dreamed of by many, to which all may come for light and leading.

Constituted and limited as we are, we cannot ascertain, as the typical church, results in individual lives. I doubt whether any other church

in New York City ever carried on its work with such limited funds. We have held from 26 to 30 Sunday-evening gatherings each year, with a total annual attendance ranging from 35,000 to 50,000, largely composed of those who attend no other church. The funds at our disposal for all purposes (exclusive of rent), including music, fees and traveling expenses of speakers, printing and advertising, have been between $500 and $600 a year. The cost thus has been less than 1½ cents for each attendant. Under such conditions it is not possible to do all that should be done. We cannot know our people as a city pastor knows his, individually, and follow them helpfully to their homes and out into the world; so that the estimate of the influence of our Sunday-evening services upon individual lives can only be surmised. Yet who that has heard Lyman Abbott, Thomas R. Slicer, Henry van Dyke, Thomas C. Hall, — to name only a few of those who have come frequently to our platform and who repre-

sent the type of man we seek, — will assume that their words do not inspire to higher living?

But more, far more should be done. We are a unique body. I have sometimes called the roll of the various "isms" from the Sunday platform, in making certain broad appeals, and found all there — philosophical anarchists, socialists of every phase, single-taxers, also adherents of every religious creed, and the larger multitude unallied and without other religious associations. Yet at the doors of entrance we forget all that separates; we are brothers working for a common cause, cherishing a common faith. The fraternal spirit that rules at our great gatherings can be understood only by one who has frequently been present. Were we in a position to provide adequately for the music, and begin the exercises of each Sunday evening with a choral service that should be in spirit a prayer* adapted to the needs of

*The only prayer ever offered in the Sunday services was that of the Rev. Bipin Chandra Pal, a representative of the Brahmo Somaj, who stated to the audience that such was

such a body; to supply pulpits for men of power, who cannot on other terms leave their pulpits for our platform; but above all to enroll our people and follow them helpfully out into the world, the People's Church would become more truly a church for the People.

There are those to whom that which separates creed from creed, Roman Catholic from Protestant, Jew from Christian, Judæo-Christian world from all other forms of religion or of ethical faith, is more essential than that which unites Jew and Gentile. But the number is increasing of those who recognize that the heart of their own inherited faiths beats in unison with the heart of one and another faith — the world and history wide.

To the first the Institute says: "You have your work to do for Society and the individual, we ours; difference of office should not breed antagonism,

always his custom before speaking. His address on the Conception of God in the religions of India proved of extraordinary interest. The audience could with difficulty be persuaded to withdraw after two and one-half hours.

where both have the common aim of helpfulness." The second find our hall preëminently the place in which to meet and move the people.

The Institute, in its Sunday-evening work, has applied to the religious problem the same principles it applied to the social problem, unity and fraternity. It may not recognize any church as *the* church any more than it recognizes any social creed as *the* creed. On the other hand, as it antagonizes no evolutionary social movement, so also it antagonizes no church. It must and does recognize the common ethical truth contained in the teachings of every church, as it also recognizes the fraternal striving in the diverse social creeds.

In other words, while churches and creeds are many, religion, for this purpose of the Institute, is one and universal. It invites therefore the coöperation of all churches, and offers them in turn its alliance in the effort to harmonize society and inspire it Godward. Assuming this position, it is able to gather as audience men of all faiths

and no faith, and to furnish a platform to every one who has an inspiring ethical message. It is breaking down, for audience and speakers alike, the walls of separation between creeds, not bidding anyone reject his own religious opinions but rather teaching respect and recognition for the differing opinions of others. And to those who have abandoned the old faiths and cannot return to them, light and peace may come anew, through the recognized unity of religion which its work represents.

While writing this chapter, I have been reading some sketches of François Coppée, who in his old age has become a devout son of the church. Over against the unrest and dissatisfaction with present conditions which many, indeed all, social systems teach, he holds up the picture of an eternal life of justice and happiness, formerly presented by the entire Christian Church, as sufficient answer to all earth's injustice and suffering.

But I question if it be not today irreligious as

well as unintelligent for anyone to seek in that fashion to lull to sleep human woe and sense of wrong. The common man and with him, day by day, more and more of the thoughtful religious men and women of all creeds are interpreting religion in terms of this world, seeking thus to realize the prayer of the Nazarene, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done *on earth* as it is in heaven."

Human Society is still without true order or beauty, want and luxury existing side by side, while beneath all life is the sustaining earth, able to provide bounteously for every need. Some day men's eyes will be opened and they will perceive that the welfare of each is the welfare of all, and that consciousness of kind, solidarity, brotherhood, are not mere figments of the imagination, but *the* fundamental social truth. This truth once universally accepted, there will be no longer, in the large sense, a Social Problem, only minor questions of adjustment; life, for the first time, will bloom and bear fruit, and an age of

achievement, through coöperation, be ushered in that will make all before accomplished seem but the work of pygmies. And then the prayer of the Christ will begin to have fulfilment.

A CLUB SOCIAL

CHAPTER VII

A PEOPLE'S CLUB

WE were in a cabinet-maker's shop, and my friend George Tombleson was doing two things at once, busy at his trade as gilder and describing to me the work and ambitions of his father.

"My father was all his life through a workingman, but he was interested too in books and study and tried to get all his fellow workingmen similarly interested. He was also one of the first to stir up talk about the improvement of workingmen's homes. Through an address he gave in a church he got the clergyman and some of his parishioners, who happened to be the owners of workingmen's homes, to look into the way they were housing the laboring man, and the result was that their workingmen's houses were rebuilt. He had, too, a great deal to do with founding the first of the London workingmen's clubs, and they

have since spread all over England. That is something we ought to take hold of. It will do more for workingmen than anything else."

That conversation took place while we were starting the Institute and months before any lecture had been given. The outcome was an agreement between us that, as soon as conditions seemed favorable, we would take up the club problem.

The first year's experiment with the Institute had been successful, but at its close we were not sure that the interest would be maintained. Our courses, through their novelty, might have drawn an audience that would not follow permanently work of so serious and special a character. We waited therefore until the second year should open before broaching the idea of a club.

The inaugural meeting of the second season, Monday, November 14, 1898, drew a large and enthusiastic audience, and it then became clear that the time was ripe for further experiment.

Three days later, therefore, a circular was issued announcing our purpose of establishing self-supporting workingmen's clubs for lectures, study and discussion, each club independent and all in alliance with the central organization.

A delay followed the announcement, caused by our financial weakness, but the matter was actively taken up in January, 1899, and on the 19th of that month a meeting was called in Room 24 of the Cooper Union for the purpose of organizing the first of these clubs. The director met an audience of some 300 and explained the character of the proposed club. The recognition of brotherhood was to be the basis of the social life, and all persons of both sexes above the age of 16 were to be eligible, no matter what their position, occupation, social, political or religious belief, character being the sole test. The club was to govern and support itself and be allied to the Institute. Its purpose was to furnish a healthful social center and also a place of assemblage where

the problems of the day could be informally discussed, and whence a non-political, non-partisan influence for civic and social betterment would go forth. The general plan was heartily approved, and a committee on organization appointed, on which among others were a philosophical anarchist, a socialist, a single-taxer, a clergyman, a Columbia professor of Political Economy and several representatives of Labor. The report of this committee was accepted at a second meeting, February 8th, at which a temporary constitution was adopted and officers elected, permanent organization being deferred until the members of the new club should have become acquainted with each other and should know better what they desired. Ernest H. Crosby was unanimously chosen President.

The People's Club No. 1, as it was called, started with great enthusiasm on the part of the membership and the heartiest approval of the community as voiced in the press. Probably in

the entire history of New York no other assemblage of so heterogeneous a composition was ever organized into a social club. Not only every phase of the Social Unrest was represented, but also, while the less privileged sections of society were in the majority, wealth and social position were not without their representatives of both sexes. Temporary quarters were furnished by St. Mark's Episcopal Church in its parish house, and the club occupied its own home, at No. 1 3d Avenue, a month later, March 9th. The expenses for reconstructing and furnishing the rooms — an old Masonic hall — had been provided by friends of the Institute * and the library, some 500 volumes, was given by the publishers of the city. The membership at the outset, 200 to 250, reached by May 1st 350, with 250 applicants.

The club showed from the start a vigorous democratic life and an intolerance of any control

* Wm. E. Dodge was the chief contributor and remained as long as he lived the club's strongest supporter.

save that of the majority of the membership. But with all its intense democracy and the individualism of its diverse elements, for a time a strong sentiment of unity held all the sections firmly together. If we disputed, it was without personal bitterness and without ever losing our sense of deep loyalty to and affection for our club and faith in the ideas for which it stood.

But the very publicity which had facilitated the initial steps created difficulties that came gradually to threaten the very existence of the club. It seemed that a magnet had been found capable of attracting the most divergent social and political elements, a new center established for the gathering together of the people. If the experiment succeeded and the people's clubs multiplied, a force of great potentiality would be available for political or social-political purposes, for the advancement of the interests of individuals or organizations. For what insuperable obstacles would any written constitution afford? Granted

that such constitution prohibited the club from allying itself with any political or social movement, where majority rule was the law, the constitution could be changed at will, or, if that did not seem desirable, the same membership, or such portion thereof as wished, could at any moment reorganize next door under another club name with political aims.*

A factional spirit, aroused apparently by the desire to capture and use the club movement, was soon rife, and the faction became ere long a well-disciplined minority, ably officered and voting as a unit, over against a divided majority. Added to this, weaknesses in our constitution and by-laws became apparent. The characters of applicants for admission were not in the nature of

* Tammany Hall, suspecting at the outset a political purpose, sent a representative to watch and, if necessary, capture the movement. The emissary, being an unprejudiced observer, became convinced that the intent of the organizers was sincerely non-partisan and non-political, and, after frankly admitting the reason for which he had joined the club, gave hearty and valued coöperation.

things closely scrutinized. We welcomed the man or woman without a home; the club was established especially for these, but with the faction, through clever manipulation of the elections, in control of the two most important committees, viz., the membership committee and house committee, it became easy to admit a partisan multitude, while those admitted were not held strictly to the payment of monthly dues nor to the preservation of order in the club-rooms. The constitution providing no means of removing an unsatisfactory official, a minority in power could defy a majority. In short, with the growth of the factional spirit, discipline became relaxed, the new membership progressively less desirable, and the old and worthy members began to lose heart.

Conditions grew worse as time went on, and growth ceased, indeed, a rapid falling off of membership set in, though much good educational work was done meanwhile and many evenings were spent in common social pleasure. Yet be-

fore the first year had run its course, the club gatherings had become almost invariably scenes of bitter factional strife, and it was clear that either the club movement must end or else decisive steps be taken to correct conditions.

Final action was precipitated by a meeting held by the faction on a Sunday afternoon, to which the press was invited and where the Institute and its methods were violently attacked. At the next club meeting, some 75 members, representing a majority of the element in sympathy with the Institute's aims, tendered their resignations and immediately reorganized under a constitution of different tenor as the People's Institute Club A.

Not all who were desirable club-members had abandoned the old organization. To a number the action taken seemed extreme or too precipitate, but it was the purpose of the Institute, in advising this step, to bring the faction to terms by compelling it, through loss of support, to accept such a readjustment as should insure

cessation of strife and the common pursuit of the purposes for which the club had been organized, and thereafter to reunite the two sections. This result would have been achieved within a very brief period had not some friends of social betterment, with honest purpose but ill advisedly as they recognized later, come to the rescue of the original club and kept it alive for a few months longer, although constantly degenerating, until, abandoned by them also, it closed its doors.

Meanwhile the new club had begun its life, with no property save a few camp-chairs and some 50 books, — all the furnishings of the original club having been forfeited by the secession, — and without the favor of the outside world. The public scandal caused by the rupture had thrown discredit upon the whole movement, and even many of our best friends stood aside for a time, unwilling to associate with a work of doubtful issue.

To those of us who were responsible for the

THE LADIES' CLUB-ROOM

original organization and also for the separation, there came moments of serious self-examination. The club movement was too important to be intrusted to incompetent hands. We had undertaken it uninvited, and, if we failed, would be fairly chargeable with a possible delay of years in organizing such work. The little group that gathered in the new, bare rooms at East 10th street became strongly welded together in the months that followed. Men and women whose earnings were small paid not only their regular dues but much more each month, in order to meet expenses, and these were held down to the rental and gas.

Then the club began to grow again, slowly and healthfully. The first anniversary, Feb. 7, 1901, was celebrated in new and more commodious quarters at 241 East 14th street, which we occupy today but have long since outgrown. Troubles have arisen from time to time during the three years of the new club's career; they are indeed inseparable

from community life; but they have been only transient, superficial. Such a thing as a faction has not been known, and long ago the confidence of the public and press was rewon. Our present membership is some 375, of which one-third are women; a larger membership our quarters do not permit. The club supports itself entirely on the basis of ten cents a week dues, and had, on August 1st of the present year, 1903, a surplus of $450 in the treasury. Our library, wholly purchased and composed of standard works, numbers some 1,350 volumes.*

The club life is very healthful and helpful. The presence of both sexes stimulates such social features as dancing, games, occasional theater parties and outings, is the secret of the success of our dramatic section in its presentation of plays, and also has much to do with the decorum as well as the charm of our club-life. But we are in the

*Paid for from the funds of the People's Institute, and owned by it.

main a serious-minded company, as our educational sections, nine in number during the last season, testify. These included Civics, Ethics and Philosophy, English Literature, Elocution, Dante, Hygiene, a Debating Section, a Dramatic Section, and a Woman's Section. The teaching staff was made up of volunteers, some of the city's ablest students and our earnest supporters. Rev. Thomas R. Slicer had charge of the class in Ethics, numbering usually fifty, and Robert E. Ely, Secretary of the League of Political Education, of the class in Civics, about equally large.

At the opening of the first club the question was raised by the press as to the policy of the Institute in regard to the use of alcoholic beverages in these clubs. The answer then given was that the decision in this matter would be left to each club. But the introduction of alcoholic liquors in our club has not been even suggested; and today, with the home-life developed as it is, especially through the presence of women, a move in this

direction would have no following. Any such step would be considered to imperil the peace and prosperity of the club and degrade its tone.

Has the ideal of brotherhood been realized? I believe it has, as perfectly as it is possible under existing conditions. Certainly no such thing as patronage or air of superiority would be tolerated for an instant, and we try to help each other up to the limits of our powers. Differences of race, faith, or social position concern us not at all. Our rooms are filled almost every evening, and they are a home to all, to many *the* home. They are not loaned to us for certain evenings, nor bestowed by charity, but owned and paid for by ourselves; not institutional in character but home-like in furnishing and in division of space. Such we mean always to keep them, never passing in the case of any one club certain limits in membership and in size of building.

As to government, the failure of the first club created serious misgivings in regard to the capac-

ity for complete self-government of those who would naturally be attracted to the proposed clubs. This distrust was common to the charter members of the new club and to the trustees of the Institute. The constitution of the new club reserved, therefore, a portion of the control to the Institute and made the club an integral part thereof, one-half of the directors and of the membership committee being named by the Institute and removable at will. The Institute must, however, select its appointees from the club membership.* This control, at first actual, has become purely nominal, the Board of Trustees confirming the nominations sent in by the officers of the club.

No old member of our club is capable of passing a dispassionate judgment upon it. It has become too much life of his life. But a few words from

*The present constitution is as brief as that of the original club was the reverse. The latter was supposed to have provided for every emergency, but results have proved that a brief code of rules is more efficient for the maintenance of order and the accomplishment of the will of the majority.

an address made by a guest at one of our anniversary dinners may be quoted. If they do not express what we have actually accomplished, they do define what we have attempted. He said in substance: "I am a college man and was a member of a fraternity. I know the closeness of the bond that unites men in such an organization, and I have often pondered over the question whether it might not be possible to discover some principle in society that would furnish a bond of union among men of all sorts and conditions equally strong, and I have never been able to discover it. While I have been dreaming you have been working, and what I sought for you have apparently found."

It was not the intention of the Institute to organize a single People's Club; rather it purposed through this experimental club to work out the problem, regarding it as the social side of the entire movement. For we felt and still feel that the creation of centers of healthful social resort

for the people, so organized as to meet their needs, not others' ideas of their needs, is one of the most important works in which any organization can engage.

It will not do to assume that the establishment of social-religious clubs will satisfy this demand. This is not said with any intention of criticizing the methods or depreciating the work of such organizations, solely to point out their limitations. Is the downtown man differently constituted from the uptown? If not, let any member of the Union League Club or of the Century Association ask himself how he would view the incorporation of a prayer-meeting or other religious exercises into the weekly club-programme. And it is not to depreciate religion to affirm that it can be expressed in fraternal acts as well as in devotional exercises.

Furthermore, the people do not desire charity any more than they do intruded religion. Herein they prove again the identity of character be-

tween worthy and self-respecting men and women in all ranks. Does the uptown-club man desire to have the expenses of his club, incurred for himself and his comrades, met by others, or to meet them himself; to control its policy through officials he elects, or to have it controlled from outside? Gifts are indeed accepted by all clubs, club buildings even, but never by a self-respecting club under conditions that imply patronage or impair independence. The attitude of the people, at least of those for whose needs the Institute seeks to provide, is identical, save that more emphasis must be laid upon the demand for direct self-control, since there is no section of our citizenship so jealous of independence, so abhorrent of patronage.

The ideal People's club is thus one conformed to the people's ideas, self-governing, self-supporting, devoted to such purposes as its membership and not an outside interest determines. It has needs, and these arise in major part from the fact that the rentals in the congested districts, where

such clubs would naturally be established, are relatively higher than in other parts of the city. The cost of launching a club is likely to be a burden heavy for the shoulders of the charter-members, few in number and earning small wages. A library will be gathered too slowly for the best interests, and the rooms remain bare and unattractive, if expenditures must be met wholly from the dues and such slight contributions in addition as the members' loyalty provides. When the time comes to secure permanent quarters, the club will face a very difficult situation and unfortunate delays will occur.

Our present club meets today, as already observed, all its expenses and has a good treasury surplus, derived from extraordinary sources of income, chiefly entertainments.* But to show

* The ordinary income from dues barely meets expenses for rental gas and janitor, though rigid economy is observed. The dues, ten cents a week, are as high as our general membership can afford. It should be remembered that in the Y. M. C. Associations the dues do not usually cover more than fifty per cent of annual expenses, notwithstanding free rental.

this good balance-sheet it has been compelled far too long to live and carry on its varied educational and social work within the limits of a single parlor floor and a front basement. It has suffered, in consequence, both in growth and efficiency, work planned being crowded out and social and educational desires clashing. It will move, since it must, but its home-problem is a most serious one.

But why should not a People's club movement be so endowed as to be able to assist at least in the provision of homes and libraries for the different clubs, leaving current expenses in every instance to be borne by the membership? Would an uptown club object to such assistance? Such aid would not offend the jealous sense of self-dependence of the people or weaken their self-reliance, and would be heartily appreciated. I speak from knowledge.

The People's Institute club plan proposes thus a system of clubs distributed throughout the city

and federated much as the states of our Union, with a few general rules to determine policy and conduct, such as non-partisanship in politics, religion, and social faith; membership open to all of good character and repute; decorum in the club-rooms; beyond these general regulations, full liberty to each club to direct its own life, to decide, *e. g.*, as to the use of alcoholic liquors, and whether its membership shall be of one sex or both. The central governing body would be representative of the different clubs, and membership in one would confer certain privileges in all. Self-support would be the rule as far as the current expenses are concerned. Whether all the property should vest as now in the central body, or each club should be also in this respect independent, would be a question for later decision. Probably the wiser policy would be — at the outset, at least — for the central body, represented today by the Trustees of the Institute, to be the depository of the funds and provide the club quarters,

allowing each club, if it so wished, to make good the sums advanced. Under such conditions, in case a club failed to conform to the general rules, it would forfeit its charter, and, the property reverting to the central body, the latter could organize at once, if deemed wise, a new club in the old quarters.

It is scarcely necessary to point out that such a club system does not provide for the submerged element of our citizenship, those namely who, through misfortune or fault, or both causes, have lost power of self-direction and pride in self-dependence. These must be reached by other agencies, our social work being limited to those who desire and intend to care for themselves but need a helping hand and the counsel of experience.

But money is not the only nor the chief need. There are men and women uptown, favored by life with gifts of privilege beyond their fellows of the congested districts, and seeking fields of use-

fulness. The club work greatly needs their assistance, but it imposes one condition. They must join it as comrades, or not at all.

I do not need to dwell upon the value of places of healthful social resort in developing good citizenship. Were our streets clear of all allurements to unhealthful or vicious life, the positive value of such homes would be great. But with the presence of the saloon and its congeners, the demand for such substitutes becomes an imperative one. The saloon problem especially is always with us, and our partisan politics joined with fanaticism so complicates it as to render wise legislation, based on the world's experience, extremely difficult and probably more or less remote. But one thing is immediately practicable, and its need is enforced by the concurrent testimony of all students of this problem. Constructive work must supplement destructive legislation. If you close a saloon or other place of similar character, you must open a social resort of a different type,

and you should close the first — it has been done repeatedly — by opening the second.

Such an alternative, resembling the home in its spirit and in its setting and in the presence of both men and women, the Institute has conceived and in its club worked out as an example of what should be done in every section of our city.

While I write, a movement starting within the club is under way, with the purpose of securing a permanent club-home. It is proposed to organize a Stock Company from club members and the trustees and friends of the Institute. The shares are to be $5.00 each, payable in ten monthly instalments. It is already plain that our members will subscribe liberally, according to their means. All or nearly all are wage-earners.

To help without impairing the sense of self-dependence and to develop full self-control has been our purpose here. We have felt that, in a small world, we were working at the same problem of democracy that engages so earnestly today

the thought of the large world. In such measure as the club solution bears witness to the capacity for self-direction of the few from among the people, in like measure it should strengthen faith in the ultimate success of society in dealing with the larger problem.

CHAPTER VIII

A PEOPLE'S HALL

PUBLIC attention has recently been called to the need of providing for New York City one or more assembly halls adequate in size and appointments. This need has been long recognized and frequently expressed. The People's Choral Union, at the suggestion of its leader, Frank Damrosch, began many years ago collecting funds for a People's Hall that should be devoted to music and general instruction through lectures. Similarly the idea has stood from the first before the People's Institute, but until now the time has not appeared ripe for its realization. Practical wisdom demanded that a thorough test should first be made of the responsiveness of the people to all the different departments of work for which such a hall would naturally provide, that we might not find ourselves, after large expendi-

tures of money, time and energy, in possession of a building, noble architecturally, but which answered no real civic need.

The results of work for the people, undertaken along many lines within recent years, furnish today sufficient proof of the need and large usefulness of such a building. The People's Choral Union and the People's Symphony Concert Association have demonstrated the eagerness of those of limited means — the vast majority — to avail themselves of opportunities of musical instruction and of listening to the best in music. The City History Club has been carrying on for several years a most important work in popularizing a knowledge of city history and government and stimulating thereby civic loyalty and pride. It needs a center where its chief work for adults shall be done and whence its influence may radiate throughout the city. The Social Settlement movement is growing in a strong, healthful way, new centers being established from year to

year. The buildings are in the nature of things too small and the funds too limited for the provision of musical or dramatic entertainments of a high educational character, or for constant instruction and inspiration from the leaders in American thought and public life, such men as appear regularly upon the People's Institute platform. There should be a center properly equipped to do this higher work for the settlements. Organizations, such as the Legal Aid Society and many others, that provide for daily imperative needs of the people, should be given similarly a central working station near to the life and confidence of the people. The People's Institute, for its part, has demonstrated the usefulness of an evening school of Social Science, a Forum and a Church, and has proceeded far enough in its experiment with the drama to insure the success of a People's Theater.

The constructive materials for a broad and inspiring work for the people are at hand. The

gain, through bringing together in one center allied associations that have justified their existence by years of successful experiment, is manifest.

Time was — and not so long ago — when sympathy with misfortune expressed itself through indiscriminate giving. The modern spirit has substituted organized charity. Today in social-betterment work, which is based upon fraternal obligation and privilege, the justice and joy of sharing, organization is still lacking. A People's Hall would provide the needed center for such organization. In building such a hall, New York City would therefore not be giving material form to the phantasy of any dreamer, but would be only acting with the practical business spirit our twentieth-century life demands, concentrating for the greater economy and efficiency of existing lines of work, and adequately providing for agencies of civic and social betterment, that have already proven their usefulness.

How shall this People's Hall be built? By all the people, for rightly conceived it must represent all. Built by a single individual or by a small group of individuals, the hundreds of thousands composing our citizenship would not feel it to be theirs as they would had they themselves contributed according to their means, no matter how little. Built by a section of the community, the workingmen for example, it would still fail to represent all the people. Built by the city, it would be controlled by the municipality through its official heads. But the people, in their hall, must have the right to criticise and, if they see fit, condemn all their representatives in public office, and use a liberty, touching every matter, too large for any building under municipal control. For how long would any political party, in possession of the city government, tolerate in a municipal hall attacks upon its conduct of office? How long would its partisans permit their elected representatives to allow such assaults to pass unchal-

lenged, even were they so inclined? Furthermore, in its official character, a city must be scrupulously careful not to give offense. Yet that official circumspection, which is wise and necessary, is inconsistent with the freedom in thought and utterance that is the vital air of a democratic assemblage.

The practice of the People's Institute, as compared with that of the Board of Education, in its public lectures, illustrates the essential difference. The work of the former could not be carried on by the latter for a single week, without provoking, and justly, criticism from national, political, social, or religious interests that felt themselves offended, and considered the municipality without excuse in allowing its halls and its funds to be used for such a purpose. Yet our experience proves that liberty need not degenerate into licence, and that self-control and full democratic freedom may coëxist.

The ideal method, then, of building the People's

Hall would be one that enlisted the coöperation of every citizen as an individual and gave to each a sense of partnership justified by the facts.

The joint committee appointed at a meeting in the Cooper Union May 10, 1903, called for the purpose of organizing effort in behalf of a central assembly hall, after describing what has been already accomplished by the People's Choral Union, the Symphony Concert Association, and the People's Institute, defines its conception of the need, character, and uses of such a building as follows:

"These organizations, with many others that have been engaged in this movement, come now unitedly before the citizenship of New York and ask that a home adequate to the demand and worthy of the city be provided for this and similar work. They claim:

"(1) That no part of what they propose can be regarded as experimental.

"(2) That a democracy depends for its stability

and healthful growth upon a virtuous, intelligent, alert citizenship; a good understanding between men of all occupations; and a full recognition, on the part of those chosen to public office, of their responsibility to the people.

"(3) That no means for accomplishing these results equals that which they now propose, a building constructed by all the people for the use of all."

The committee then submits a tentative plan.

"The proposed People's Hall will enclose an area about equal to a city square. The center will be occupied by a large auditorium containing an organ, and a stage spacious enough for the presentation of dramas.

"This auditorium will serve as Church, Forum, Hall of Music, and Theater. All that has been done hitherto under limited conditions will be continued, and, in addition, the masterpieces of the drama, both ancient and modern, will be staged and great choral works presented.

"State and city officials will be glad of the op-

portunity to give here regular reports of their stewardship, and it can scarcely be doubted that representatives of the national government will also be frequently heard.

"A corridor will surround the auditorium, forming at the entrance thereto a spacious portico. Corridor and portico will be given to the fine arts, to copies of masterpieces and originals. Here also art exhibitions will be held. Beneath the auditorium there will be a gymnasium and swimming-pool.

"Beside the large hall, the building will contain smaller halls intended for lectures, chamber-music recitals, social gatherings; the offices of the administration and of societies engaged in civic betterment, including the central office of the People's Club system; class-rooms for study in Social Science, History, Literature, Music, Art, Ethics, Philosophy; and small museums for the use of students in various departments of Natural Science, intended to prepare them for intelligent

work in Nature or in the large collections in the museums of the city. Space will also be provided for a library, reading-room and restaurant. A roof-garden will be available for summer use.

"What the places of popular assemblage before the temples and the open-air theaters were to the Greek democracies, the Forum to Rome, the Althing and the Folk-Moots to the Scandinavians and Anglo-Saxons, this and more the People's Hall will be to the citizens of New York.

"Here it is hoped a national art in music, the drama and the fine arts will develop, in touch with the people, responding to their needs and expressing their aspirations.

"All instruction will be based, as now in the People's Institute, on the recognition of the unity of human experience and the brotherhood of man; of the universal reign of law and of evolution, as the law-ordered process of growth; of democracy as the highest known expression of law in the ordering of human society, and of the suffrage as

at once the supreme privilege and responsibility of the social man.

"Built by all, the People's Hall will be used by all, and in that common, fraternal gathering-place false distinctions of class, foreign to our democratic spirit, will cease and be forgotten, and true patriotism, first civic, then national, then universal, be fostered."

The terms of this description of the influence and usefulness attributed to a hall, which exists as yet only in the imagination, may seem to some excessive. But if exaggeration there be, it is born of that buoyant hope which fills, or should fill, the mind of every American when he dwells upon the possible future of his country. Why should it not lead the world in progress, in the upward march of mankind to ever higher planes of social order? Why should not the American of the latter half of the twentieth century have well-founded reason to be proud of his birthright, prouder than ever citizen of the Roman world-

empire? To give earnest of such fulfilment is the supreme desire of every worker in this cause.

The forces competent to achieve that result are at hand, in the fundamental integrity and moral earnestness of the masses, the sincerity of purpose and broadening social vision of priest and scholar, the desire on the part of an ever increasing number of those who have to share with others, — a desire which, under the socializing spirit of our age, is leading charity back to its real meaning, love — finally in the quickening consciousness today, among all sections of the people, of individual authority and responsibility in public affairs. What is needed is the union of all earnest citizens, irrespective of social, religious and party ties, and a hall attractive in character and appointments and convenient of access to all parts of the city, where men of all occupations and conditions may meet and discuss common interests and unite in the search for social truth and demo-

cratic ideals, and where thus mutual confidence and fellowship shall grow. This, with training in citizenship, is the special function of such a People's Hall.

What the people themselves think of the proposed hall, what they will do to assist in its realization, the morrow will show. Their response, however, when an appeal was made to them from the Institute platform, is a goodly presage. The regular Sunday contribution was trebled in actual money given and decupled in pledges. Individual workingmen gave sums that recalled vividly that scene of the poor widow of Jerusalem, casting her gift into the treasury.

Opposition to such expansion and coördination of Work with the People should come only from those who fear the rule of the people, who are still unconvinced of the sanity of democratic government and would flatter the many with the semblance, while reserving ever more carefully to the few the substance of authority.

Of these we are not; rather of those to whom the rule of all the people is the highest form of human government, and its realization the social ideal supremely worthy a life's consecration.

CHAPTER IX

PROGRESSIVE DEMOCRACY

THE preceding chapters are a record of work with the People purely from the side of observing in how far theory and practice accord. For each phase of the experiment has been but a new application of the root-principles, unity and fraternity. It remains for me to sum up the conclusions of observation and experience, touching the people's attitude toward the more important problems of the day.

Here I am well aware that I shall invite criticism from all sides. For whose experience is large enough to authorize him to speak for so complex and vast a body of individuals as the people? Am I not projecting my own social faith outward, and imagining that such projection is the faith of the audiences gathered by the work? Or, granting even that I have not erred in my

reading of their thought, is it not rash and misleading to infer therefrom identity in social attitude between the people at large and the few thousands who assemble in the Cooper Union?

I grant the large possibilities of error that attach to conclusions formed from data that are often only general impressions received within a limited field of observation. A traveler among a people with whom he is in sympathetic relations, both by nature and through earlier experiences, returns after a protracted sojourn and reports. His conclusions as to folk-character and tendencies have formed themselves from countless impressions, the majority unrecorded even in conscious memory, and are valuable in direct ratio to the clearness of his observation and the manifoldness of his associations during the period of his sojourn. By similar standards my conclusions must be judged.

Presiding at almost every public meeting of the Institute since its foundation, I have faced au-

diences ranging weekly from 3,500 to 5,000, and reaching during some weeks 7,000. It is the testimony of all public speakers that they *feel* their audiences, know whether any part, perhaps any individual, is opposed to them. From long experience as a lecturer I know what it is to feel an audience, to be both in and out of touch with it. I have found the relation between chairman and audience in the work of the People's Institute a still closer one than that between speaker and hearers in the lecture hall. That audience has become for me an individual whose thoughts I read, whose pulse I touch. I know, before the speaker of the evening does, whether he is striking the right chord, is ministering or not to the intellectual and spiritual needs of our people.

The audience is not in the fullest sense representative of New York City. Uptown is usually absent or feebly represented. It is just to call it a gathering of those variously styled the masses, the common people, or simply the people. But

in giving to it this appellation, it must be borne in mind that among the people — meaning here those who are less favored in wealth and station, and who form the large majority of every civic population—knowledge drawn from books eagerly read in leisure hours, or, amongst a younger element, from advanced study in some institution, is not absent. We number not a few well-read men of mature years and many students of the College of the City. In race, religion, political and social faith we are as complex as our national life. Women are in a small minority, scarcely one in twenty of our usual audience. The lower age limit is about 18, our work not attracting the youngest. Human waifs, the flotsam of civic life, drifting in to find a warm corner, are present, but here again the soberness of our work repels.

The audience is rather constant than variable. The same faces look up at me from nearly the same places, not merely week after week, but year

after year. I doubt whether the average metropolitan church with free sittings has a more regular attendance.

In short, the People's Institute audience is mainly composed of a constant body of the more intelligent and earnest representatives of the masses with occasional additions from uptown. With the expansion for which we are preparing we hope to have uptown come to a fuller recognition of the need of studying, in common with the People, social problems, and that the future People's Institute will attract thus an audience that is representative not merely of the intelligence and civic spirit of downtown but of the entire city.

But my touch with the People is not limited by the audiences that assemble week after week. The nature of the Institute's work places the management in relations of greater or less intimacy with all efforts and workers in the cause of social betterment throughout the country and in a meas-

ure beyond its bounds, especially in England. There is indeed no comradeship among workers closer than that which associates today all who are enlisted in this movement. It creates in a sense a new fatherland, the country of the ideal.

It is rare that a prominent representative of progressive social thought visits the United States without seeking or being sought by the Institute and delivering his message from our platform. The essential identity of character in the social movement of the large world with that coming under our observation is well illustrated by a recent incident. I have just read John Graham Brooks' study of Social Unrest. It is based upon investigations in America and Europe extending through many years. I find his report so true to conditions within the field of our relations that I could write at the close of every chapter almost: "Verified by personal experience." It is to be remembered in this connection that such men as Mr. Brooks report

frequently from our platform the results of their research, and thus serve to link the lesser with the larger world.

Within the city, it is our duty to note all that is being attempted for or against the People's interests, and to associate ourselves with others in the People's behalf up to the limit that our non-partisan and preëminently educational character authorizes.

Out of the impressions received from these various sources a conception has gradually formed itself of what the People wishes — in other words, a politico-social programme — which, in my judgment, under some modified form, would win today the adherence of a large section if not a majority of the masses of the people in our great cities. I have styled this programme or attitude Progressive Democracy, meaning thereby an advance in the direction of government of, by and for all the people. In defining its terms, it need hardly be said that my personal convictions do

not consciously intrude, my function being purely that of a reporter.

1. The People are today Socialistic in tendency, though not as a body socialists; but this Socialistic tendency will be strengthened or weakened, according as the dominant political parties manifest an anti-democratic or a democratic spirit.* In defining the People's attitude as Socialistic I mean that, while unprepared to accept the full theory of Socialism, unpersuaded as to its practical wisdom, they are ready and eager for experiment along the lines of social ownership of those activities that most nearly concern the life and comfort of all.

Their attitude in regard to municipal franchises in or under the streets is well known. In an audience of the People, free to express its wish,

*So far as the witness of the Socialist element in our audience is of value, it indicates that, as in Germany, so here intolerance, extreme radicalism, is losing ground and the movement is being transformed from a revolutionary to a radical-democratic party.

not one vote in 100 would be cast for private ownership and control of such franchises. We have made repeated tests of this.* But they are ready to go much farther in public ownership. The union of the People, being a closer and more conscious one in our cities than elsewhere, experiments in communal possession would naturally have first and fullest illustration there. As to water, gas, the electric light, the means of transportation, and allied public utilities, the People's mind is now ready for advance toward communal ownership and operation. A large number would favor also advance in the national domain, the telegraph, telephone, railroads, being among those privately controlled public-service agencies that most invite absorption.

Beyond the public-service agencies already mentioned and others allied to them, there are many lines of corporate business upon whose management

* On the question of public *versus* private ownership of the Rapid Transit system, the vote of our audience was 1,690 in favor of public ownership to 10 in favor of private ownership.

the well-being of all depends, preëminently those that deal in the necessities of life, such as milk, grain, meat, the food stuffs in general, coal and oil. It is to the people intolerable that individuals should have the power to create monopolies here and to proceed, through artificially enhanced prices, to appropriate the property of others to their own use. Monopolies are illegal, but the presence of their representatives in the halls of legislature and of their attorneys on the judges' bench is breeding, among the people, a profound distrust of the sincerity of purpose and the actual power of organized government to protect the weak against the strong, the many against the few, and inspires a growing fear lest society be reverting to slavery under a new form.

Progressive Democracy demands, therefore, that the laws now on the statute book, intended to safeguard the common weal, be enforced; that, if insufficient, they be made sufficient. The demand for communal ownership of the primal

necessities of life is not as yet advanced. It will be delayed just in proportion to the proved efficacy of other means to protect the people's interests against assault from the modern robber knight and his accomplices in offices of public trust. In brief, the People's attitude in regard to communal ownership is sympathetic toward experiment, especially within the municipal field, and insistent upon protection against individual or corporate greed.

A renewal of the situation created by the strike in the anthracite region, with the offensive insistence upon the preëminence of private rights over public needs, would give, as it has already given, a forceful impetus to this movement toward public ownership. "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." The People believe that the earth's fulness was intended for the comfort, not to say the existence, of all. They consider that through misconception of the extent of private rights and misuse of government, much of that

fulness has been diverted from its intended purpose. Being in the large majority, having the suffrage, awakening to consciousness of their power, they do not intend to permit any further monopolization; on the contrary, they have determined to recover gradually their alienated share of the common heritage.

The American People have long patience, good common sense. With such union as should come, is already coming, between masses and classes, one that tends ever more to make the use of either term an anachronism, we shall have increasingly a balance between social theory and recognition of practical possibility. Today the People can be trusted to hold advance within the limits of wisdom, whatever be the demand for communal ownership and control of those agencies that are most nearly related to the universal needs.

But here, as in all that is yet to be included in this presentation, it is consummate folly sullenly to oppose the popular tide. Its volume is too

vast for that. Stubborn opposition will only cause the flood to gather behind the barriers. Wisdom indicates rather that the spirit of public leadership should be in sympathy with the democratic ideal that inspires this growing desire and demand that, within the limits of justice, all be made sharers in all. And, by this, Communism is in no sense implied; rather an ever more conscious insistence upon the recognition in law and social conduct of human solidarity. This is the real significance of that universal demand of the worker today for justice, not charity. And why should any true American object to this ideal? Does not America in the last analysis mean this? Is it not because its meaning has been thus interpreted that, in countless multitudes, the disinherited of the elder civilizations have turned and are still turning their faces and their steps hitherward as to the land of promise? With such a spirit guiding all effort, and with a readiness to learn from other times and other civilizations,

and to interchange the results of individual and class experience, we may hope to advance, by safe steps of experiment, to ever higher and happier planes of social order.

2. As second article, which may be regarded as a corollary of the first, I place the demand for such laws as to taxation, the tariff, etc., as shall put an end to state-conferred privilege and tend toward the greatest possible equalization of property conditions consistent with practical wisdom, rather than, as is too much the case at present, to foster the development of monopolies and the centralization of wealth.

Money is power, today more than ever before, in a democracy more than in a monarchy, in this country more than in any other. For here there are no dykes of old privilege and tradition, no monarchy, nobility, fixed classes, state church, nothing but the alert democracy of the people, to prevent the subjection of the moneyless many to the moneyed few — only that and the good will

of the money-lords. But no lesson of history is clearer than that the possession of power corrupts and transforms the good man into the tyrant, the civilized man into the savage. Progressive Democracy will not suffer its authority incorporated in government to be used for the upbuilding of a new and base order of despotism, founded upon the dollar, nor for the revival of feudalism, even admitting the unthinkable possibility of its being permanently benevolent.

3. As third article in the creed of Progressive Democracy I would place the restoration to the people of direct control in government at every stage, from the nomination of candidates to the passage of laws. If it is objected that such act would not be restoration, since in fact the People never exercised this authority, then it is demanded that democracy, having come to maturity and to a recognition of its fulness of authority and responsibility, be accorded a control commensurate therewith.

The methods proposed for the realization of this transference of control are many, and include among others Direct Nomination, the Initiative, the Referendum, and the Imperative Mandate.* The popular desire for such modifications is a witness of the intelligent interest of our democracy in methods of government. So far from being indifferent to public affairs it shows an increasing eagerness and determination to assume its share of responsibility.

4. Local Option in all matters that primarily and preëminently concern a locality. The government of our cities in matters of excise, franchises, etc., by the state must cease. No one has the right to regulate the manner of my eating and drinking provided my conduct does not transgress the bounds of decorum and comity between

* It is to be noted here in passing that the terms mentioned above, while probably mere words to the average uptown audience, to the People stand for concrete realities, planks of the bridge over which passes the path leading to true democracy.

citizens or endanger the public weal. Of these matters, the community must be sole judge. For those sumptuary laws only that have the sanction of local public opinion are respected, and to force from without such legislation upon a community is to discredit it in advance. Indeed, the very essence of democratic government is the largest conceivable individual liberty, consistent with the highest welfare of all, and the special educational function of a democracy is to train the individual in self-government. And who save the community, of which I am part, should have the power to take away from me and bestow upon another my share in the communal franchises?

Fear and greed are the two motives that prompt refusal of such local self-government — fear of the use to which it will be put, unwillingness to relinquish the gain in sight, from bestowal of franchises and other public rights. The first is synonymous with fear of democracy, and is out of time and place here; it belongs to another age

and to a government founded not on faith in but distrust of the people; as to the second, when we no longer fear assaults of greed from without, we can more readily protect ourselves at home. When our state legislatures are shorn of power in regard to matters of purely local concern, we shall not be constrained to keep watch upon every obscure bill introduced nominally by a senator from Podunk or an assemblyman from Wayback, but really drawn by counsel for some metropolitan franchise-grabbing corporation and hiding under seemingly innocent circumlocutions a stealthy reaching after the people's possessions. Nor shall we have our difficult excise problems worked out for us by strangers at a distance, with eyes not single to our interests but looking at the state coffers or partisan advantage.

Progressive Democracy's attitude toward many, indeed all, public questions is a theme alluring to the mind that has been brought into an intimacy of relation with the mind and heart of the

people, but I shall only add two points that sum up the whole subject.

5. The principle of unity teaches the solidarity of all the individual interests of the community. "We are many members but all of one body," and that body is superior to the members; if therefore conflict occurs, the individual interest must yield to the communal. "*Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*" was said in old time. The modern version of that sentiment would be, — "It is sweet and fitting to live for one's country," and the more so in that dying for the fatherland is but a single act, though the supreme one, while living is a series of acts linked to the eternal order of things.

The coördinate principle, fraternity, teaches the potential value of each individual life to the entire community. We cannot lose a single one from the ranks. Neither hunger, nor cold, nor atrophy of powers through enforced inaction, nor failure, through Society's neglect in any form,

to attain complete unfoldment, none of these should be allowed to destroy or cripple a single life-force, for no life can be spared from the sum of human energy to be exerted in behalf of all and each. I am my brother's keeper and all are my brothers. In my individual capacity, with its necessary limitations, I cannot care for all. Nor can such care be left to private initiative. It will not reach far enough; its action is fitful. Only the hands of all joined in one, the Communal Hand, can effect this. In other words, Progressive Democracy considers the welfare of every citizen the concern of the community in so far as the manifestation of such concern does not imperil initiative or weaken self-reliance.

Practically interpreted this means care for those incompetent, through age, inexperience, sex, or other conditions, to protect and provide for themselves: in other words, child-labor-legislation; free and compulsory education in lower grades and free education of a selected few in higher

grades; laws protecting women wage-earners; labor-legislation to secure fair hours and wage and proper sanitation and protection to life and limb for workers; peaceful settlement of industrial disputes; men out of work not permitted to drift into wretchedness and possible vice and crime through the unconcern of the community, but intelligent measures of relief, not charity, devised — possibly through interstate coöperation in the provision of opportunities for work; state relief to sick and unfortunate and perhaps old-age pensions; tenement-house laws, public parks, playgrounds, libraries, baths, etc.; crime treated as disease due in large measure to defective inheritance and environment, and prisons as potential school-houses for the reform of criminals and their restoration to society; wilful idleness — when it involved dependence upon the community — as a vice to be corrected where possible by enforced labor.

6. In International relations, Progressive De-

mocracy regards war as a belated survival of barbarism, and would reduce as rapidly as possible all instrumentalities of war, armies and navies, to a peace footing. This is visionary, perhaps, but it is well for the world's future that the masses everywhere are coming to recognize a fraternity broader than state or race, and to ask, "Why should we make war upon each other longer or consume our manhood in preparations for war?"

The right of self-government inheres in the recognition of fraternity as in the acceptance of democracy; therefore the people have no sympathy with land-grabbing, imposing the will and rule of stronger upon weaker nations. If interference is permissible, it should be only because of transgression of the universally recognized rights of man, *e.g.*, flagrant oppression by rulers of their subjects, persistent wronging of neighbors; and here arbitration should serve as instrument or, if coërcion is needed, such a union of nations

should formulate the demand as to compel obedience without the need of shedding blood. For the rest, hands off and, between states as between individuals, comradeship and mutual helpfulness.

Where colonies are held, the holding land has assumed responsibilities, burdens. The duty of the mother country is to prepare the foster-child for self-government and for independence, if the latter be desired. Beyond, the dream of a world's federation of independent states lures many. If some tomorrow should make of that dream a reality, what a field for endeavor would open before the individual, citizen no longer of a limited state but of a world-commonwealth! Meanwhile the dream works as leaven of international unity.

In the entire attitude of Progressive Democracy toward the Social Problem there is no foolish pretense of changing suddenly human nature. The evil and the good therein are alike recognized. Only Progressive Democracy builds upon the

good and believes in its potential predominance. To effect this it would foster conditions favorable to its development and such as would furnish incentives to social rather than individual ambition, to helping the neighbor rise in comradeship rather than elevating self through climbing upon the neighbor's shoulders.

The old style politics, whose logical results we see in municipal misrule and national and state perversion of public opportunity to private advantage, was based on the weakness of man's nature, his susceptibility to ignoble lures. "Wealth covets public privilege to beget more wealth, and is willing to buy it underhand, if it can secure it thereby cheaper and quicker than in any honest way. Party strength depends upon the fealty of the camp followers, and offices and 'jobs,' used as payment of past or guarantee of future service, fulfil their legitimate purpose." Corruption, on this theory, is inseparable from government, because like the individual it is fallible, and the

sensible, practical thing, therefore, is to see that corruption does not go to such extremes as to arouse protest and strengthen the opposition, but that its unavoidable use be made to subserve always the party's advantage. So long as the "gang's" crookedness promotes the success of the party, everything may be condoned. Such a theory of politics still makes bedfellows of our best and worst, intelligent patriots and the debauchers of states and municipalities. There is no need to name names here, they are on everybody's lips. How long shall this continue? Is it not far more practical even to build on man's susceptibility to worthy motives of conduct? Belief in man's capacity for goodness is as well founded and will contribute infinitely more to society's redemption than belief in his utter depravity. The Christ affirmed the God-possibility of man, and Progressive Democracy's faith in man lacks not, therefore, at least one defender. Come soon the time when, building thereon, we

shall reawaken the public conscience, make success inseparable from character, and brand him as the supreme criminal who sins against the whole community!

Progressive Democracy is not, as already said, Socialism, though some may, without due thought, identify the two. For it moves from no preconceived theory as to how justice is to be established among men, and is not ready to assert where individualism should cease and collectivism begin, expecting to discover that only through slow experiment. It is thus conservatively radical. Nor is its outreach urged by uninformed desire alone. For the people know of the success that is attending experiments in municipal ownership in Glasgow, Liverpool and many other cities of the old world, and of successful experiments in this direction more recently undertaken in various American cities; of the coöperative movements in Belgium, Great Britain and Ireland, and similar isolated attempts here; so also of the displacement

of slums with model municipal homes and the countless other forms through which the new social awakening is manifesting itself in one and another part of the world, notably in New Zealand.

One whose home is a rocky islet past which ocean currents sweep deep, vast, constant, to whom the land is only a blur at the horizon's rim, can tell of the movement of the waves, their direction, their volumed strength, but perhaps cannot speak as confidently of conditions dominant upon the firm-rooted continents. So my judgment of the relation of this People's movement to the whole life of Society may be, doubtless is, distorted more or less by the fact that its currents so constantly surround me. I grant it; I shall but express my own fallible judgment. The future belongs to the people. How near, how remote, that People's rule I would not venture to determine. Ere it come in its fulness, not only the stubborn selfishness of privilege among the few

must be overcome, but also the vast inertia of indifference and unintelligence among the many. The individual, facing the immensity of the task, would be discouraged did he not know past doubting that he was working with eternal law, and that only through the work of individuals can the weal of all be achieved.

The near future will see a rapid democratic development. Democracy is waiting today impatiently for its leader, a man of clear vision, calm judgment, firm will, clean life, proved devotion, unflinching courage, enkindling enthusiasm. The Bryan movement drew its strength, not so much from a popular belief in the silver standard, as from the hope that this leader had appeared, and defeat came mainly for two reasons: his point of departure was a mistaken one, and the time was not ripe.

Thoughtful men, who distrust social theories which define with precision conditions far in advance, and hold that wise progress is through ex-

periment, should study carefully the People's attitude, consider whether its ethical basis is or is not a mistaken one, conformed or opposed to the ideals held up by the world's supreme ethical teachers; whether present-day developments, in the transference of one and another public-service activity to communal possession and advantage, are tending on the whole to social advance or otherwise. And should their judgment approve the spirit, even though disapproving many of the forms, in which this popular movement manifests itself, let them reflect whether, through uniting their force with the movement and seeking to temper its possible impatience, they will not accomplish more than by opposing it, with the danger of intensifying social divisions and leaving the control with leaders who hold only extreme views.

It is clear that the conception of Society as a unit made up of integers, each one of which is in organic relations with all others and the whole,

suggests for every social problem an *a priori* solution whose errors practical experience alone can correct, but if this conception is sound and becomes generally accepted as such, we are already half-way toward our goal. For we know where the land of promise lies, and, with compass to guide and patience and faith in humanity to sustain us, the path can be found, or, if necessary, willing hands will make one. For Society to turn its face in that direction is to take the first step toward the translation of ideal into real. For the individual to behold that vision of a redeemed society is to have his life flooded with new impulses. All social workers the world wide have seen it and all are prophets of its dawning.

As I have sat upon the platform of the Cooper Union, often it has been as though an army with banners and song were marching before me. Humanity's slow, patient march out of the dim, suffering, unjust past toward the growing light of a future of justice, unity, fraternity — the march

and the marching-song of triumphant democracy were what I saw and heard. So I have come at last to understand what they meant who said "*Vox Populi, vox Dei.*"

CONCLUSION

THE little book just ended is the story of the application of theory to life. Faith in unity and brotherhood won the confidence of the people, made possible the establishment of a school of social science where all social faiths could meet and reason together, ordered education on the basis that the life-record of every race is part of the universal human record, founded a forum, organized a church, built up a self-governing, self-supporting club, and in no instance followed precedents. These things were done because the basic principles are true. What individuals have done in a small way, here and elsewhere, through the Social Settlements and the manifold other expressions of the newly awakened Social Consciousness, in good time the world will do in a large way till the vision come true.

APPENDIX

Appendix A.

THE PEOPLE'S INSTITUTE

FIRST COURSE.

Thursdays, March 17 to June 16, 1898, 8 P.M.

*A star means that lantern slides are used.

March 17. INAUGURAL. The Watchwords of Democracy: (1) Liberty, *Dr. R. Heber Newton;* (2) Equality, *Samuel Gompers;* (3) Fraternity, *John S. Crosby;* (4) Our Watchword, Unity, *Charles Sprague Smith.*

*March 24. The Democracies of Greece: Their Rise, Culmination and Decline. *Thomas Davidson.*

March 31. Should Immigration be Restricted? Affirmative, *Samuel B. Donnelly, Prof. Richmond Mayo-Smith;* negative, *Charles H. Cooke, John S. Crosby.*

*April 7. The Roman Republic: Its Rise, Culmination and Decline. *Prof. Munroe Smith.*

*April 14. The Old Norse Civilization. Iceland a free state; its Rise and Fall. *Charles Sprague Smith.*

April 21. The Public Control and Operation of Franchises. *Edward McHugh* (President of Longshoremen's Union), *John Dewitt Warner, Hugh H. Lusk.*

April 28. Democracy in England. *Sidney Webb.*

*May 5. Switzerland and its Solution of the Problem of Democracy. *W. D. McCrackan.*

May 12. The Problem of the Unemployed. *Prof. John B. Clark, Ernest H. Crosby, Bolton Hall.*

May 19. From the Monarchy to a Republic in France. *Prof. Adolphe Cohn.*

June 2. The Problem of the Living Wage. *Edward King.*

June 9. Democracy in America. *Prof. Jeremiah W. Jenks.*

June 16. THE OUTLOOK. Our Country's Undeveloped Empire, *Dr. Edward McGlynn;* The Ballot and Education, *Rev. Thomas R. Slicer;* American Citizenship, *William Hepburn Russell;* The People's Institute and its Mission, *Charles Sprague Smith.*

SUPPLEMENTARY COURSE.

*SPANISH HISTORY. *Charles Sprague Smith.*

Saturdays.

May 7 Primitive Spain. Beginning to 711.
May 14. Moorish Spain, 711–1492.
May 21. The Reconquest, 718–1492.
June 4. Spain under the Catholic Kings and the House of Austria, 1492–1700.
June 11. Modern Spain and the Bourbons. 1700 to the present.

Appendix B.

LABOR PROBLEMS.

As Viewed by Men and Women in the Ranks of Labor.

CARNEGIE LYCEUM. *Fridays*, 8 *P. M.*

1898
March 18. LABOR'S DEMANDS. (1) From an International Standpoint, *Edward McHugh*, representative of International Federation of Dock, Shore and River Workers; (2) From the American Trades-Union Standpoint, *Edward King;* (3) From the Standpoint of an East-side Worker, *Leonora O'Reilly.*
March 25. The Problem of the Unemployed. *Henry White* (General Secretary of the United Garment Workers), *Edward Thimme.*
April 1. What the Trades-Unions have accomplished. *J. W. Sullivan.*
April 8. The Problem of the Living Wage. *Edward King.*

Appendix C.

SIXTH SEASON, 1902–1903.

THE COOPER UNION, GREAT HALL,

Every Sunday, Monday, Tuesday and Friday Evening.

THE LECTURE ROOM,

Every Thursday Evening.

Doors open at 7.15. Lectures begin at 8 o'clock.
All Courses, save those of Sunday evening, are given in co-operation with the Cooper Union.

SUNDAY PROGRAMME.

IN THE GREAT HALL.

ETHICAL ADDRESSES AND DISCUSSIONS.

Music, Vocal or Instrumental, every Evening.

1902

Nov. 9. Political Corruption versus Purity in Politics. *Dr. Stephen S. Wise.*

Nov. 16. Brotherhood. How can it be Realized? *Dr. Amory H. Bradford.*

A MASTER OF LIFE. *Rev. Thos. R. Slicer.*

Nov. 23. Jesus of Nazareth and his Environment.

Nov. 30. The Intellectual Preëminence of Jesus.

Dec. 7. The Moral Certainty of Jesus.

Dec. 14. Fallacies of Force. *Prof. Thomas C. Hall.*

Dec. 21. Our Philippine Problem. *Dr. J. G. Schurman,* President of Cornell University.

Dec. 28. Things that Separate and those that Unite Men. *Dr. Samuel Schulman.*

1903.

Jan. 4. America's One Danger. *Rev. George L. McNutt.*

Jan.	11.	A New Aspect of Zionism. *Dr. Maurice H. Harris.*
Jan.	18.	Character; Its Social Dangers and Demands. *Rev. Leslie Willis Sprague.*
Jan.	25.	Christian Socialism. *Dr. George Hodges*, Dean of the Theological School, Cambridge, Mass.
Feb.	1.	The Republic of Man. *Dr. Nathaniel Schmidt*, Cornell University.
Feb.	8.	The Church and the Working Man. *Rev. Merle St. Croix Wright.*
Feb.	15.	Child Labor as a National Problem. *Rev. Edgar Gardner Murphy.*
Feb.	22.	The Art of Making a Living. *Louis F. Post*, Editor of the Public, Chicago.
March	1.	William Morris and the Ethics of Work. *Prof. Charles Zueblin*, Chicago University.
March	8.	Arbitration. *W. H. Baldwin, Jr.*, President of the Long Island R. R.
March	15.	Fifth Anniversary. *Robert Fulton Cutting*, Chairman. Speakers: *Dr. Henry M. Leipziger, John Martin, Edward D. Moffett, W. H. Raiman, Charles Sprague Smith, Rev. Leslie Willis Sprague, J. G. Phelps Stokes.*
March	22.	What is Religion? *Dr. Lyman Abbott.*
March	29.	Christian and Heathen Nations. A Study of International Ethics. *Dr. George W. Knox.*
April	5.	Abraham Lincoln. *Dr. S. P. Cadman.*
April	12.	Easter Concert. International Peace. Addresses by *Frederick W. Hinrichs, Mornay Williams, F. W. Holls.*
April	19.	Evolution and the Negro Question. *Rev. Percy S. Grant.*
April	26.	The Moral Value of Business. *Herbert N. Casson.*
May	3.	The People's Institute Past and Future. *Edwin Markham, Charles Sprague Smith.*
May	10.	CLOSING MEETING. Mass Meeting on Behalf of the People's Palace. Speakers: *F. X. Arens, W. H. Baldwin, Jr., Prof. John B. Clark, Prof.*

Adolphe Cohn, John S. Crosby, Frank Damrosch, Frederick W. Hinrichs, Edward D. Moffett, Dr. Joseph Silverman, Rev. Thos. R. Slicer, Charles Sprague Smith.

MONDAY PROGRAMME.

IN THE GREAT HALL.

LITERATURE AND ART.

1902 ITALIAN ART.* *Miss Antonie Stolle* of Boston.

Nov. 10. Mural Painting in Florence and Padua. *Giotto, Fra Angelico.*

Nov. 17. Early Renaissance. *Masaccio, Filippo Lippi, Botticelli.*

Nov. 24. Master and Pupil. *Ghirlandajo* and *Michelangelo.*

Dec. 1. Master and Pupil. *Perugino* and *Raphael.*

Dec. 8. High Renaissance. *Correggio, Fra Bartolommeo, Andrea del Sarto, Sodoma,* etc.

Dec. 15. Venice and Venetian Painting. *The Bellinis, Palma Vecchio, Titian,* and others.

SHAKESPEAREAN RECITALS. *Marshall Darrach.*

Dec. 22. Hamlet.

Dec. 29. Twelfth Night.

1903.

Jan. 5. Julius Cæsar.

Jan. 12. A Midsummer Night's Dream.

Jan. 19. Macbeth.

Jan. 26. The Tempest.

Feb. 2. The Songs of Shakespeare. A Song Narrative. *Miss Charrille Runals.*

Feb. 9th to March 30. Recess. The Platform was occupied by Columbia University.

REPORTS OF THE HEADS OF CITY DEPARTMENTS ON THEIR WORK.

April 6. Charities, *Commissioner Folks;* Correction, *Commissioner Hynes.*

April 13. Water Supply, Gas and Electricity, *Commissioner Monroe;* Street Cleaning,* *Commissioner Woodbury.*
April 20. Bridges,* *Commissioner Lindenthal;* Docks,* *Commissioner Hawkes.*
April 27. Health.* *Commissioner Lederle.*
May 4. Finances. *Deputy Comptroller N. Taylor Phillips.*

TUESDAY PROGRAMME.

IN THE GREAT HALL.

NATURAL SCIENCE AND HISTORY.

1902.

EVOLUTION. LAMARCK TO DARWIN.* *Prof. W. B. Scott,* Princeton University.

Nov. 11. Ancient Ideas on Evolution.
Nov. 18. Evolutionists of the XIX. Century.
Nov. 25. Means of Proving the Theory. Embryology.
Dec. 2. Proofs of Evolution. Fossils (I).
Dec. 9. **First Symphony Concert.** Conductor, *Hermann Hans Wetzler.*
Dec. 16. Proofs of Evolution. Fossils (II).
Dec. 23. Geography of Animals and Plants.
Dec. 30. Alaska and the Klondyke. *Prof. Angelo Heilprin,* University of Philadelphia.

1903.

Jan. 6. Earning and Eating. *Robert E. Ely*
Jan. 13. **Second Symphony Concert.** Conductor, *Arthur Mees.*

COMPARATIVE STUDIES IN GOVERNMENT. *Edward N. Vallandigham.*

Jan. 20. Great Britain and the United States of America.
Jan. 27. Austria-Hungary and the United States of America.
Feb. 3. Recent Changes in European Socialism. *John Graham Brooks.*

Feb. 10. The Home of the Italian Immigrant.* *Rev. W. E. Davenport*, Headworker of the Italian Settlement House, Brooklyn.

Feb. 17. **Third Symphony Concert.** Conductor, *Frank Damrosch.*

HISTORY OF THE REPUBLIC OF FLORENCE.* *W. Hudson Shaw, M.A.*, Staff Lecturer in History of the American Society for the Extension of University Teaching.

Feb. 24. The Early History of Florence.
March 3. Dante.
March 10. Florence during the XIV. Century.
March 17. The Medici and the Renaissance.
March 24. Savonarola.
March 31. The Fall of the Republic.
April 7. Forgotten Makers of History. *Herbert N. Casson.*
April 14. The Rapid Transit Situation. *Hon. John Ford.*
April 21. **Fifth Symphony Concert.** Conductor, *Frans X. Arens.*
April 28. Social Service. *Herbert N. Casson.*

THURSDAY PROGRAMME.

IN THE LECTURE ROOM ON THE SECOND FLOOR OF THE COOPER UNION.

HISTORY AND SOCIAL SCIENCE.

1902.

THE MAKING OF MODERN ENGLAND. *Cecil F. Lavell*, Staff Lecturer in History of the American Society for the Extension of University Teaching.

Nov. 13. England under George III.
Nov. 20. The Struggle with France. *Nelson and Wellington.*
Dec. 4. The Industrial Revolution.
Dec. 11. The Thirty Years' Peace. *John Bright.*
Dec. 18. Beaconsfield and the New Imperialism.

1903.

Jan. 1. Gladstone, the Apostle of Liberalism.

LABOR MOVEMENTS, ANCIENT AND MODERN. *Prof. John B. Clark*, Columbia University.

Jan. 8. Labor Movements of History.
Jan. 15. Trade Guilds.
Jan. 22. Wages under Modern Conditions.
Jan. 29. Protective Tariffs and Wages.
Feb. 5. Monopolies and Wages.
Feb. 12. Labor Legislation.

THE ELEMENTS AND STRUCTURE OF SOCIETY. *Dr. Charles Zueblin*, Associate Prof. of Sociology, Chicago University.

Feb. 19. Natural Advantages.
Feb. 26. Wealth.
March 5. Man and Woman.
March 12. Public Health.
March 19. Domestic Organization.
March 19. **Fourth Symphony Concert. (In the large Hall.)** Conductor, *Walter Damrosch.*
March 26. Social Organization.

SOCIAL ETHICS. *Rev. Thomas R. Slicer.*

April 2. Self-Realization.
April 9. Real Relations.
April 16. What is Education?
April 23. **General Meeting of the Institute.**
April 30. The Sovereign Citizen.

FRIDAY PROGRAMME.

IN THE GREAT HALL.

PRESENT PROBLEMS.

A Forum for the Discussion of the Questions of the Day.

1902.
Nov. 14. Martinique and Mont Pelee.* *Prof. Angelo Heilprin.*

Nov. 21. John Ruskin as a Social Reformer.
Nov. 28. A Century of Women's Rights. *Mrs. Percy Widdrington*, Lecturer and Delegate of the London Fabian Society.
Dec. 5. Anglo-American Relations. *G. H. Perris*, of London, the Editor of Concord, etc.
Dec. 12. Some Problems Raised by the Recent Coal Strike. *John Graham Brooks.*
Dec. 19. England's Industrial Outlook. *John A. Hobson.*
Dec. 26. England's Political Outlook. *John A. Hobson.*

1903.
Jan. 2. The World's Economic Burden. *George L. McNutt.*
Jan. 9. The Steel Trust and Profit Sharing. *John Martin.*
Jan. 16. Debate on Socialism. *Prof. Edwin R. A. Seligman*, Columbia University, *H. Gaylord Wilshire*, Editor Wilshire's Magazine.
Jan. 23. The Growing Social Ideal. *Rev. Leslie Willis Sprague.*
Jan. 30. The Remedies for Trusts. *Prof. J. W. Jenks*, Cornell University.
Feb. 6. An Imperialistic Democracy. *Henry D. Lloyd.*
Feb. 13. Abraham Lincoln. A Dramatic Sketch. *Benjamin Chapin.*
Feb. 20. Debate on the Single Tax. *Prof. John B. Clark*, Columbia University, *Louis F. Post*, Editor of the Public, Chicago.
Feb. 27. Election of Senators by the People. *Charles Frederick Adams, John S. Crosby.*

ETHICAL INTERPRETATIONS OF SOCIAL PROGRESS. *Prof. Edward Howard Griggs.*

March 6. Social and Personal Evolution.
March 13. The Dynamic Character of Personal Ideals.
March 20. The Content of the Ideal of Life.

March 27. Greek and Christian Ideals in Modern Civilization.
April 3. The Ethics of Social Reconstruction.
April 10. Good Friday. Recess.
April 17. The New Social Ideal.
April 24. Municipal Ownership. *Prof. Chas. Zueblin.*
May 1. How are Democratic Ideals to be Realized? *Hon. John De Witt Warner.*

Discussion follows every address. Hour of closing, 10 *o'clock.*

Appendix D.

THE PEOPLE'S FORUM.

PUBLIC LIBRARY HALL, NEW ROCHELLE.

Sunday Afternoons at three o'clock.

1903.
Nov. 29. The Conflict Between Capital and Labor. *W. Bourke Cockran, Charles Sprague Smith,* Chairman.
Dec. 13. Debate? Single Tax or Socialism — Which? *Ernest H. Crosby, A. Gaylord Wilshire.*
Dec. 27. Education After the Elementary Day Schools. *Dr. William H. Maxwell,* Supt. of New York Public Schools.

1904.
Jan. 10. Debate. Are Strikes a Social Benefit? *Herbert N. Casson, Hon. Martin W. Littleton.*
Jan. 24. The Uses of the Beautiful in City and Village Administration. *Edward M. Shepard.*
Feb 7. Debate. Should Immigration be Restricted? *Charles A. Young, Isaac N. Mills.*
Feb. 21. The Two Birthdays in February. *Hon. Almet F. Jenks,* Justice of the Supreme Court.

March 6. Some Points on Which Employers and Labor Unions Ought to Agree. *Dr. W. S. Rainsford.*
March 20. The True Elements of National Greatness. *Dr. J. G. Schurman.*

Discussion follows every address.

Appendix E.

THE HARLEM PEOPLE'S INSTITUTE.

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